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P O P E's
ODYSSEY.

VOL. II. A

G E O R G E R.

GEORGE, by the Grace of God, King of *Great Britain, France and Ireland*, Defender of the Faith, &c. To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting: Whereas *Bernard Lintot* of Our City of *London*, Bookseller, hath by his Petition humbly represented unto Us, that he is now Printing a Translation, undertaken by Our Trusty and Well-beloved *Alexander Pope*, Esq; of the *Odyssey* of *Homer* from the *Greek*, in Five Volumes in *Folio* upon large and small Paper, in *Quarto* upon Royal Paper, in *Octavo* and *Duodecimo*, with large Notes upon each Book, and that he has been at great Expence in carrying on the said Work, and the sole Right and Title of the Copy of the same being vested in the said *Bernard Lintot*, he has humbly besought Us to grant him Our Royal Privilege and Licence for the sole Printing and Publishing thereof for the term of fourteen Years: We are therefore graciously pleas'd to gratify him in his Request, and do by these Presents, agreeable to the Statute in that behalf made and provided, for Us, Our Heirs and Successors, give and grant unto him the said *Bernard Lintot*, his Executors, Administrators and Assigns, Our Royal Privilege and Licence for the sole Printing and Publishing of the said Translation of the *Odyssey* of *Homer*, for and during the term of fourteen Years, to be computed from the Day of the Date hereof. Strictly forbidding and prohibiting all Our Subjects within Our Kingdoms of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, and other Our Dominions, to reprint or abridge the same, either in the like, or any other Volume or Volumes whatsoever, or to import, buy, vend, utter or distribute any Copies of the same or any Part thereof Reprinted beyond the Seas, within the said Term of fourteen Years, without the Consent or Approbation of the said *Bernard Lintot*, his Heirs, Executors and Assigns, by Writing under his or their Hands and Seals first had and obtained, as they and every of them offending herein will answer the contrary at their Perils. Whereof the Master, Wardens, and Company of *Stationers* of Our City of *London*, the Commissioners and other Officers of Our Customs, and all other Our Officers and Ministers whom it may concern are to take Notice, that due Obedience be given to Our Pleasure herein signified. Given at Our Court at *St. James's* the Nineteenth Day of *February* 1724-5. In the Eleventh Year of our Reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

TOWNSHEND,



ΜΝΗΣΤΗΡΟΦΟΝΙΑ

P. Fouquier scul.

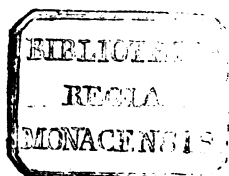
THE
ODYSSEY
OF
HOMER.

Translated from the *GREEK*.

VOL. II.



LONDON:
Printed for BERNARD LINTON.
MDCCXXV.





*Jupiter sends Mercury
to y^e Nymph Calypso.*



THE
FIFTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.



VOL. II.

B



The ARGUMENT.

The Departure of *Ulysses* from *Calypso*.

Pallas in a Council of the Gods complains of the Detention of Ulysses in the Island of Calypso; whereupon Mercury is sent to command his removal. The seat of Calypso describ'd. She consents with much difficulty, and Ulysses builds a vessel with his own hands, on which he embarks. Neptune overtakes him with a terrible tempest, in which he is shipwreck'd, and in the last danger of death; 'till Leucothea a Sea Goddess assists him, and after innumerable perils, he gets ashore on Phæacia.

T H E

T H E
F I F T H B O O K
O F T H E
O D Y S S E Y.

THE saffron Morn, with early blushes spread,
Now rose refulgent from *Tithonus*' bed;
With new-born day to gladden mortal sight,
And gild the courts of heav'n with sacred light.

Then

N O T E S.

Ulysses makes his first entry in this book. It may be ask'd where properly is the beginning of the *Action*? It is not necessary that the beginning of the *Action* should be the beginning of the *Poem*; there is a natural and an artificial order, and *Homer* makes use of the latter. The *Action* of the *Odyssey* properly begins neither with the *Poem*, nor with the appearance of *Ulysses* here, but with the relation he makes of his departure from *Troy* in the ninth book. *Bossu* has very judiciously remark'd, that in the constitution of the fable, the Poet ought not to make the Departure of a Prince from his own country the foundation of his *Poem*, but his Return, and his stay in other places involuntary. For if the stay of *Ulysses* had been voluntary, he would have been guilty in some degree

B 2

4 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

5 Then met th' eternal Synod of the sky,
 Before the God who thunders from on high,
 Supreme in might, sublime in majesty.
Pallas, to these, deploras th' unequal fates
 Of wise *Ulysses*, and his toils relates;

Her

degree of all the disorders that happen'd during his absence. Thus in this book *Ulysses* first appears in a desolate Island, sitting in tears by the side of the Ocean, and looking upon it as the obstacle to his return.

This artificial order is of great use, it cuts off all languishing and un-entertaining incidents, and passes over those intervals of time that are void of action; it gives continuity to the story, and at first transports the Reader into the middle of the subject. In the beginning of the *Odyssey*, the Gods command *Mercury* to go down to the Island of *Ogygia*, and charge *Calypso* to dismiss *Ulysses*: one would think the Poem was to end in the compass of a few lines, the Poet beginning the action so near the end of the story; and we wonder how he finds matter to fill up his Poem, in the little space of time that intervenes between his first appearance and his re-establishment.

This book, as well as the first, opens with an Assembly of the Gods. This is done to give an importance to his Poem, and to prepare the mind of the Reader to expect every thing that is great and noble, when Heaven is engag'd in the care and protection of his Heroes. Both these Assemblies are placed very properly, so as not to interrupt the series of action: The first assembly of the Gods is only preparatory to introduce the action; and the second is no more than a bare transition from *Telemachus* to *Ulysses*; from the recital of the transactions in *Ithaca*, to what more immediately regards the person of *Ulysses*.

In the former council, both the Voyage of *Telemachus* and the Return of *Ulysses* were determin'd at the same time: The day of that assembly is the first day both of the principal action, (which is the return of *Ulysses*) and of the incident, which is the voyage of *Telemachus*; with this difference, that the incident was immediately put in practice, by the descent of *Minerva* to *Ithaca*; and the execution of it takes up the four preceding books; whereas the principal action was only then prepared, and the execution deferr'd to the present book, where *Mercury* is actually sent to *Calypso*.

Ensta

Book V. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 5

- 10 Her heroë's danger touch'd the pitying Pow'r,
The Nymphs seducements, and the magic bow'r.
Thus she began her plaint. Immortal *Jove*!
And you who fill the blissful seats above!
Let Kings no more with gentle mercy sway,
15 Or bless a people willing to obey,
But crush the nations with an iron rod,
And ev'ry Monarch be the scourge of God:
If from your thoughts *Ulysses* you remove,
Who rul'd his subjects with a father's love.
20 Sole in an isle, encircled by the main,
Abandon'd, banish'd from his native reign,
Unblest he fights, detain'd by lawless charms,
And press'd unwilling in *Calypso's* arms.
Nor friends are there, nor vessels to convey,
25 Nor oars to cut th' immeasurable way.
And now fierce traytors, studious to destroy
His only son, their ambush'd fraud employ,
Who pious, following his great father's fame,
To sacred *Pylus* and to *Sparta* came.

Enstathius therefore judges rightly when he says, that, in the first council, the safety alone of *Ulysses* was propos'd; but the means how to bring it about are here under consultation, which makes the necessity of the second council.

6 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

- 30 What words are these (reply'd the Pow'r who forms
The clouds of night, and darkens heav'n with storms)
Is not already in thy soul decreed,
The chief's return shall make the guilty bleed?
What cannot Wisdom do? Thou may'st restore
35 The son in safety to his native shore;
While the fell foes who late in ambush lay,
With fraud defeated measure back their way.

Then thus to *Hermes* the command was giv'n;
Hermes, thou chosen messenger of heav'n!

- 40 Go, to the nymph be these our orders born:
'Tis *Jove's* decree *Ulysses* shall return:
The patient man shall view his old abodes,
Nor help'd by mortal hand, nor guiding Gods;

In

v. 43. *Nor help'd by mortal hand, nor guiding Gods.*] This passage is intricate: Why should *Jupiter* command *Ulysses* to return without the guidance either of man or God? *Ulysses* had been just declar'd the care of Heaven, why should he be thus suddenly abandon'd? *Enstathius* answers, that it is spoken solely with respect to the voyage which he immediately undertakes. This indeed shews a reason why this command is given; if he had been under the guidance of a God, the shipwreck (that great incident which brings about the whole Catastrophe of the Poem) must have been prevented by his power; and as for men, where were they to be procur'd in a desolate island? What confirms this opinion is, that during the whole shipwreck of *Ulysses*, there is no interposition of a Deity, nor even of *Pallas*, who used to be his constant guardian; the reason is, because this command of *Jupiter* forbids all assistance to *Ulysses*: *Leucothea* indeed assists him, but it is not till he is shipwreck'd. It appears further, that this interdiction respects only the voyage from *Ogygia*, because *Jupiter* orders that
there

In twice ten days shall fertile *Scheria* find,

45 Alone, and floating to the wave and wind.

The bold *Phaeacians*, there, whose haughty line

Is mixt with Gods, half human, half divine,

The

there shall be no assistance from man, ἔτε δ' αὖτ' ἄνθρωποι, ἔτ' ἀνθρώπων; but *Ulysses* is transported from *Phaacia* to *Ithaca*, ἀνθρώπων πομπῇ, or by the assistance of the *Phaeacians*, as *Eustathius* observes; and therefore what *Jupiter* here speaks has relation only to the present voyage. *Dacier* understands this to be meant of any visible assistance only: but this seems a collusion; for whether the Gods assist visibly or invisibly, the effects are the same; and a Deity unseen might have preserv'd *Ulysses* from storms, and directly guided him to his own country. But it was necessary for the design of *Homer*, that *Ulysses* should not sail directly home; if he had, there had been no room for the relation of his own adventures, and all those surprizing narrations he makes to the *Phaeacians*: *Homer* therefore to bring about the shipwreck of *Ulysses*, withdraws the Gods.

v. 45. *Alone, and floating to the wave.*] The word in the original is σκεδῖος; νῆος, as *Eustathius* observes, is understood: It signifies, continues he, a small vessel made of one entire piece of wood, or a vessel about which little wood is used; it is deriv'd from σκεδόν, from being αὐτοσχεδῶς συμπεπληγῆσθαι, or its being compacted together with ease. *Hesychius* defines σκεδία to be, μικρὰ ναὺς ἢ ξύλα ἀ συνδύσει, καὶ ἔτι πάλιστοι: that is, a small bark, or float of wood which sailors bind together, and immediately use in navigation. This observation appear'd to me very necessary, to take off an objection made upon a following passage in this book: the Critics have thought it incredible that *Ulysses* should without any assistance build such a vessel, as *Homer* describes; but if we remember what kind of a vessel it is, it may be reconcil'd to probability.

v. 46. ——— Whose haughty line

Is mix'd with Gods.]

The *Phaeacians* were the inhabitants of *Scheria*, sometimes call'd *Drepanè*, afterwards *Cercyra*, now *Corfu*, in the possession of the *Venetians*. But it may be ask'd in what these people resemble the Gods? they are describ'd as a most effeminate nation: whence then this God-like Quality? *Eustathius* answers, that is either from
B 4 their

8 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

The chief shall honour as some heav'nly guest,
And swift transport him to his place of rest.

- 50 His vessels loaded with a plenteous store
Of brass, of vestures, and resplendent Ore;
(A richer prize than if his joyful Isle
Receiv'd him charg'd with *Ilium's* noble spoil)
His friends, his country he shall see, tho' late;
55 Such is our sov'reign Will, and such is Fate.

He spoke. The God who mounts the winged winds
Fast to his feet his golden pinions binds,
That

their undisturb'd felicity, or from their divine quality of general benevolence: he prefers the latter; but from the general character of the *Phaicians*, I shou'd prefer the former. *Homer* frequently describes the Gods as *οἱ πάσι ζωόντες*, the Gods that live in endless ease: This is suitable to the *Phaicians*, as will appear more fully in the sequel of the *Odyssey*. *Eustathius* remarks, that the Poet here gives us in a few lines the heads of the eight succeeding books; and sure nothing can be a greater instance of *Homer's* art, than his building so noble an edifice upon so small a foundation: The plan is simple and unadorn'd, but he embellishes it with all the beauties in nature.

v. 56. *The God who mounts the winged wind.*] This is a noble description of *Mercury*; the verses are lofty and sonorous. *Virgil* has inserted them in his *Æneis*, lib. 4. 240.

—————*pedibus talavia nectis*
Aurea: qua sublimem alis, sive equora supra,
Sen terram, rapido pariter cum flamine portant.
Tum virgam capit: hæc animas ille vocat Orco
Pallentes, alias sub tristitia Tartara mittit;
Dat somnos adimitque, & lumina morte resignat.

What is here said of the rod of *Mercury*, is, as *Eustathius* observes, an Allegory: It is intended to shew the force of eloquence,
which

That high thro' fields of air his flight sustain
O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundless main.

60 He grasps the wand that causes sleep to fly,
Or in soft slumber seals the wakeful eye:
Then shoots from heav'n to high *Pieria's* steep,
And stoops incumbent on the rolling deep.
So wat'ry fowl, that seek their fishy food,

65 With wings expanded o'er the foaming flood,
Now sailing smooth the level surface sweep,
Now dip their pinions in the briny deep.
Thus o'er the world of waters *Hermes* flew,
'Till now the distant Island rose in view:

70 Then swift ascending from the azure wave,
He took the path that winded to the cave.

which has a power to calm, or excite, to raise a passion, or compose it: *Mercury* is the God of Eloquence, and he may very properly be said *Σιγῶν, καὶ ἀγρίων*, to cool or inflame the passions, according to the allegorical sense of these expressions.

v. 64. *So wat'ry fowl.*] *Enslathins* remarks, that this is a very just allusion; had the Poet compar'd *Mercury* to an Eagle, tho' the comparison had been more noble, yet it had been less proper; a sea-fowl most properly represents the passage of a Deity over the seas; the comparison being adapted to the element.

Some ancient Critics mark'd the last verse τῷ ἱκέλει, &c. with an Obelisk, a sign that it ought to be rejected: They thought that the word *ἔχουσιν* did not sufficiently express the swiftness of the flight of *Mercury*; the word implies no more than *he was carry'd*; But this expression is applicable to any degree of swiftness; for where is the impropriety, if we say, *Mercury* was borne along the seas with the utmost rapidity? The word is most properly apply'd to a chariot, *ἐν ὄχῳ, ὁ ἵππ' ἀμείλιος*. *Enslathins*.

90 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

Large was the Grot, in which the nymph he found,
(The fair-hair'd nymph with ev'ry beauty crown'd)

She fate and fung; the rocks resound her lays:

75 The cave was brighten'd with a rising blaze:

v. 72. *The Nymph he found.*] Homer here introduces an Episode of *Calypso*: and as every Incident ought to have some relation to the main design of the Poem, it may be ask'd what relation this bears to the other parts of it? A very essential one: The sufferings of *Ulysses* are the subject of the *Odyssey*; here we find him inclos'd in an Island: all his calamities arise from his absence from his own country: *Calypso* then who detains him is the cause of all his calamities. It is with great judgment that the Poet feigns him to be restrain'd by a Deity, rather than a mortal. It might have appear'd somewhat derogatory from the prudence and courage of *Ulysses*, not to have been able by art or strength to have freed himself from the power of a mortal: but by this conduct the Poet at once excuses his Heroe, and aggravates his misfortunes: he is detain'd involuntarily, but it is a Goddess who detains him, and it is no disgrace for a man not to be able to over-power a Deity.

Bossu observes, that the art of Disguise is part of the character of *Ulysses*: Now this is imply'd in the name of *Calypso*, which signifies concealment, or secret. The Poet makes his Heroe stay seven whole years with this Goddess; she taught him so well, that he afterwards lost no opportunities of putting her instructions in practice, and does nothing without disguise.

Virgil has borrow'd part of his description of *Circe* in the 7th book of the *Aeneis*, from this of *Calypso*,

—————*ubi Solis filia Incos*
Affiduo resonat cantu, tectisque superbis
Urit odoratam nocturna in lumina cedrum,
Arguto tennes percurrens pectine telas.

What I have here said shews likewise the necessity of this machine of *Mercury*: It is an establish'd rule of *Horace*,

Nec deus interfit, nisi dignus vindice nodus
Inciderit.—————

Calypso was a Goddess, and consequently all human means were insufficient to deliver *Ulysses*. There was therefore a necessity to have recourse to the Gods.

Cedar

Cedar and frankincense, an od'rous pile,
 Flam'd on the hearth, and wide perfum'd the Isle;
 While she with work and song the time divides,
 And thro' the loom the golden shuttle guides,

- 80 Without the grot, a various sylvan scene
 Appear'd around, and groves of living green;
 Poplars and alders ever quiv'ring play'd,
 And nodding cypress form'd a fragrant shade;
 On whose high branches, waving with the storm,
 85 The birds of broadest wing their mansion form,
 The chough, the sea-mew, the loquacious crow,
 And scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.
 Depending vines the shelving cavern screen,
 With purple clusters blushing thro' the green.

Four

v. 80. *The Bower of Calypso.*] It is impossible for a Painter to draw a more admirable rural Landskip: The bower of *Calypso* is the principal figure, surrounded with a shade of different trees: Green meadows adorn'd with flowers, beautiful fountains, and vines loaded with clusters of grapes, and birds hovering in the air, are seen in the liveliest colours in *Homer's Poetry*. But whoever observes the particular trees, plants, birds, &c. will find another beauty of propriety in this description, every part being adapted, and the whole scene drawn, agreeable to a country situate by the sea.

v. 88. *The purple clusters blushing thro' the green.*] *Enstathius* endeavours to fix the season of the year when *Ulysses* departed from that Island; he concludes it to be in the latter end of Autumn, or the beginning of Winter; for *Calypso* is describ'd as making use of a fire, so is *Arete* in the sixth book, and *Euans* and *Ulysses* in other parts of the *Odyssey*. This gives us reason to conclude, that the Summer heats were past; and what makes it still more probable

90 Four limpid fountains from the clefts distill,
 And ev'ry fountain pours a sev'ral rill,
 In mazy windings wand'ring down the hill:
 Where bloomy meads with virid greens were crown'd,
 And glowing violets threw odors round.

95 A scene, where if a God shou'd cast his sight,
 A God might gaze, and wander with delight!
 Joy touch'd the messenger of heav'n: he stay'd
 Entranc'd, and all the blissful haunt survey'd.

100 Him, ent'ring in the cave, *Calypso* knew,
 For pow'rs celestial to each other's view
 Stand still confest, tho' distant far they lie
 Or habitants of earth, or sea, or sky.
 But sad *Ulysses* by himself apart,
 Pour'd the big sorrows of his swelling heart;

bable is, that a Vine is in this place said to be loaded with grapes, which plainly confines the season of the year to the Autumn.

v. 103. *But sad Ulysses by himself apart.*] *Enstathius* imagines, that the Poet describes *Ulysses* absent from *Calypso*. to the end that *Calypso* might lay a seeming obligation upon *Ulysses*, by appearing to dismiss him voluntarily: for *Ulysses* being absent, could not know that *Mercury* had commanded his departure; so that this favour appears to proceed from the sole kindness of the Goddess. *Dacier* dislikes this observation, and shews that decency requires the absence of *Ulysses*; if the Poet had describ'd him in the company of *Calypso*, it might have given suspicion of an amorous disposition, and he might seem content with his absence from his country: but the very nature of the Poem requires that he should be continually endeavouring to return to it: The Poet therefore with great judgment describes him agreeably to his character, his mind is entirely taken up with his misfortunes, and neglecting all the pleasures which a Goddess could confer, he entertains himself with his own melancholy reflections, sitting in solitude upon the sea-shores.

All

105 All on the lonely shore he sate to weep,
 And roll'd his eyes around the restless deep;
 Tow'rd his lov'd coast he roll'd his eyes in vain,
 'Till dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

Now graceful seated on her shining throne,

110 To *Hermes* thus the nymph divine begun.

God of the golden wand! on what behest
 Arriv'ft thou here, an unexpected guest?
 Lov'd as thou art, thy free injunctions lay;
 'Tis mine, with joy and duty to obey.

115 'Till now a stranger, in a happy hour

Approach, and taste the dainties of my bow'r.

Thus having spoke, the nymph the table spread,
 (Ambrosial cates, with Nectar rosie red)

Hermes the hospitable rite partook,

120 Divine refection! then recruited, spoke.

What mov'd this journey from my native sky,
 A Goddess asks, nor can a God deny:

Hear then the truth. By mighty *Jove's* command
 Unwilling, have I trod this pleasing land;

125 For who, self-mov'd, with weary wing wou'd sweep
 Such length of ocean and unmeasur'd deep?

A world of waters! far from all the ways
 Where men frequent, or sacred altars blaze.

But

14 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

But to *Jove's* will submission we must pay ;

130 What pow'r so great, to dare to disobey ?

A man, he says, a man resides with thee,

Of all his kind most worn with misery :

The *Greeks*, (whose arms for nine long years employ'd

Their force on *Ilium*, in the tenth destroy'd)

135 At length embarking in a luckless hour,

With conquest proud, incens'd *Minerva's* pow'r :

Hence on the guilty race her vengeance hurl'd

With storms pursu'd them thro' the liquid world.

There all his vessels sunk beneath the wave !

140 There all his dear companions found their grave !

Sav'd from the jaws of death by heav'n's decree,

The tempest drove him to these shores and thee.

Him, *Jove* now orders to his native lands

Strait to dismiss: so *Destiny* commands :

145 Impatient Fate his near return attends,

And calls him to his country, and his friends.

Ev'n to her inmost soul the Goddess shook ;

Then thus her anguish and her passion broke.

Ungracious Gods ! with spite and envy curst !

150 Still to your own ætherial race the worst !

Ye envy mortal and immortal joy,

And love, the only sweet of life, destroy,

Did

Book V. *HOMER's ODYSSEY.* 15

Did ever Goddess by her charms ingage
A favour'd mortal, and not feel your rage?

155 So when *Aurora* fought *Orion's* love,
Her joys disturb'd your blissful hours above,
'Till in *Ortygia*, *Dian's* winged dart
Had pierc'd the hapless hunter to the heart.
So when the covert of the thrice-ear'd field

160 Saw stately *Ceres* to her passion yield,
Scarce could *Iasion* taste her heav'nly charms,
But *Jove's* swift lightning scorch'd him in her arms.

v. 155. *Orion.*] The love of *Calypso* to *Ulysses* might seem too bold a fiction, and contrary to all credibility, *Ulysses* being a mortal, she a Goddess: *Homer* therefore to soften the relation, brings in instances of the like passion, in *Orion* and *Iasion*; and by this he fully justifies his own conduct, the Poet being at liberty to make use of any prevailing story, tho' it were all fable and fiction.

But why should the death of *Orion* be here ascrib'd to *Diana*; whereas in other places, she is said to exercise her power only over Women? The reason is, she slew him for offering violence to her chastity; for tho' *Homer* be silent about his crime, yet *Horace* relates it.

— *Integra*
Tentator Orion Diana
Virginæ domitus sagittâ.

Enslathius gives another reason why *Aurora* is said to be in love with *Orion*. He was a great hunter, as appears from the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*; and the morning or *Aurora* is most favourable to those diversions.

v. 161. *Scarce could Iasion, &c.*] *Ceres* is here understood allegorically, to signify the earth; *Iasion* was a great Husbandman, and consequently *Ceres* may easily be feign'd to be in love with him: The thunderbolt with which he is slain signifies the excess of heat, which frequently disappoints the hopes of the labourer.

Enslathius]

And

16 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

And is it now my turn, ye mighty pow'rs !

Am I the envy of your blissful bow'rs ?

165 A man, an outcast to the storm and wave,

It was my crime to pity, and to save ;

When he who thunders rent his bark in twain,

And sunk his brave companions in the main.

Alone, abandon'd, in mid ocean tost,

170 The sport of winds, and driv'n from ev'ry coast,

Hither this Man of miseries I led,

Receiv'd the friendless, and the hungry fed ;

Nay promis'd (vainly promis'd !) to bestow

Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.

v. 165. *A man, an outcast to the storm and wave,
It was my crime to pity, and to save ; &c.]*

Homer in this speech of *Calypso* shews very naturally how passion misguides the understanding. She views her own cause in the most advantageous, but false light, and thence concludes that *Jupiter* offers a piece of injustice in commanding the departure of *Ulysses* : She tells *Mercury*, that it is she who had preserv'd his life, who had entertain'd him with affection, and offer'd him immortality ; and would *Jupiter* thus repay her tenderness to *Ulysses* ? Would *Jupiter* force him from a place where nothing was wanting to his happiness, and expose him again to the like dangers from which she had preserv'd him ? this was an act of cruelty. But on the contrary, she speaks not one word concerning the truth of the cause : viz. that she offer'd violence to the inclinations of *Ulysses* ; that she made him miserable by detaining him, not only from his wife, but from his whole dominions ; and never considers that *Jupiter* is just in delivering him from his captivity. This is a very lively, tho' unhappy picture of human nature, which is too apt to fall into error, and then endeavours to justify an error by a seeming reason. *Dacier*,

'Tis

- 175 'Tis past—and *Jove* decrees he shall remove;
 Gods as we are, we are but slaves to *Jove*.
 Go then he may (he must, if He ordain)
 Try all those dangers, all those deeps, again.
 But never, never shall *Calypsso* send
- 180 To toils like these, her husband, and her friend;
 What ships have I, what sailors to convey,
 What oars to cut the long laborious way?
 Yet, I'll direct the safest means to go:
 That last advice is all I can bestow.
- 185 To her, the Pow'r who bears the charming rod,
 Dismiss the Man, nor irritate the God;
 Prevent the rage of him who reigns above,
 For what so dreadful as the wrath of *Jove*?
 Thus having said, he cut the cleaving sky,
- 190 And in a moment vanish'd from her eye.
 The Nymph, obedient to divine command,
 To seek *Ulysses*, pac'd along the sand.
 Him pensive on the lonely beach she found,
 With streaming eyes in briny torrents drown'd,
- 195 And inly pining for his native shore;
 For now the soft Enchantress pleas'd no more:

For

18 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

For now, reluctant, and constrain'd by charms,

Absent he lay in her desiring arms,

In slumber wore the heavy night away,

200 On rocks and shores consum'd the tedious day ;

There fate all desolate, and sigh'd alone,

With echoing sorrows made the mountains groan,

And roll'd his eyes o'er all the restless main,

'Till dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

205 Here, on his musing mood the Goddess prest,

Approaching soft ; and thus the chief address.

Unhappy man ! to wasting woes a prey,

No more in sorrows languish life away :

v. 198. *Absent he lay in her desiring arms.*] This passage has fallen under the severe censure of the Critics, they condemn it as an act of conjugal infidelity, and a breach of Morality in *Ulysses* : It would be sufficient to answer, that a Poet is not oblig'd to draw a perfect character in the person of his Héroe : perfection is not to be found in human life, and consequently ought not to be ascribed to it in Poetry : Neither *Achilles* nor *Aeneas* are perfect characters : *Aeneas* in particular is as guilty, with respect to *Dido*, in the desertion of her, (for *Virgil* tells us they were married, *connumbis jungam stabili*) as *Ulysses* can be imagin'd to be by the most severe Critic, with respect to *Calypso*.

But those who have blam'd this passage, form their judgments from the morality of these ages, and not from the Theology of the Ancients : Polygamy was then allow'd, and even Concubinage, without being esteem'd any breach of conjugal fidelity : If this be not admitted, the heathen Gods are as guilty as the heathen Heroes, and *Jupiter* and *Ulysses* are equally criminals.

This very passage shews the sincere affection which *Ulysses* retain'd for his wife *Penelope* ; even a Goddess cannot persuade him to forget her ; his person is in the power of *Calypso*, but his heart is with *Penelope*. Truly had this book of *Homer* in his thought when he said of *Ulysses*, *Vetulam suam prætulit immortalitati*.

Free

Free as the winds I give thee now to rove—

- 210 Go, fell the timber of yon' lofty grove,
And form a Raft, and build the rising ship,
Sublime to bear thee o'er the gloomy deep.
To store the vessel let the care be mine,
With water from the rock, and roſie wine,
215 And life-ſuſtaining bread, and fair array,
And proſp'rous gales to waſt thee on thy way.
Theſe, if the Gods with my deſires comply,
(The Gods alas more mighty far than I,
And better ſkill'd in dark events to come)
220 In peace ſhall land thee at thy native home.

With ſighs, *Ulyſſes* heard the words ſhe ſpoke,
Then thus his melancholy ſilence broke.
Some other motive, Goddeſs! ſways thy mind,
(Some cloſe deſign, or turn of womankind)

v. 222. *Then thus his melancholy ſilence broke.*] It may be aſk'd what occaſions this conduct in *Ulyſſes*? he has long been deſirous to return to his country, why then is he melancholy at the propoſal of it? This proceeds from his apprehenſions of inſincerity in *Calypſo*: he had long been unable to obtain his diſmiſſion with the moſt urgent entreaties; this voluntary kindneſs therefore ſeems ſuſpicious. He is ignorant that *Jupiter* had commanded his departure, and therefore fears leſt his obſtinate deſire of leaving her ſhould have provoked her to deſtroy him, under a ſhew of complying with his inclinations. This is an inſtance that *Ulyſſes* is not only wiſe in extricating himſelf from difficulties, but cautious in guarding againſt dangers.

Non

20 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.*

- 225 Nor my return the end, nor this the way,
On a slight Raft to pass the swelling sea
Huge, horrid, vast! where scarce in safety fails
The best-built ship, tho' *Jove* inspire the gales.
The bold proposal how shall I fulfill?
- 230 Dark as I am, unconscious of thy will.
Swear then, thou mean'st not what my soul forebodes;
Swear, by the solemn oath that binds the Gods.
Him, while he spoke, with smiles *Calypso* ey'd,
And gently grasp'd his hand, and thus reply'd.
- 235 This shews thee, friend, by old experience taught,
And learn'd in all the wiles of human thought.
How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise?
But hear, oh earth, and hear, ye sacred skies!
And thou, oh *Styx*! whose formidable floods
- 240 Glide thro' the shades, and bind th' attesting Gods!

v. 238. *But hear, oh earth, and hear, ye sacred skies!*] The oath of *Calypso* is introduc'd with the utmost solemnity. *Rapin* allows it to be an instance of true sublimity. The Ancients attested all nature in their oaths, that all nature might conspire to punish their perjuries. *Virgil* has imitated this passage, but has not copy'd the full beauty of the original.

Esse nunc sol testis, & hæc mihi terra precanti.

It is the remark of *Grotius*, that the like expression is found in *Deuteronomy*, *Hear, oh ye heavens, the words that I speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth.* Which may almost literally be render'd by this verse of *Homer*.

Ἰὼ γῆν τῶδε γαῖαν, καὶ ὑπὸς οὐρῆς ἑμῆρης.

No

Book V. *HOMER's ODYSSEY.* 21

No form'd design, no meditated end
Lurks in the counsel of thy faithful friend;
Kind the persuasion, and sincere my aim;
The same my practice, were my fate the same.

145 Heav'n has not curst me with a heart of steel,
But giv'n the sense, to pity, and to feel.

Thus having said, the Goddess march'd before:
He trod her footsteps in the sandy shore.

At the cool cave arriv'd, they took their state;

150 He fill'd the throne where *Mercury* had sat,
For him, the Nymph a rich repast ordains,
Such as the mortal life of man sustains:

v. 251. *For him, the Nymph a rich repast ordains.*] The Passion of Love is no where describ'd in all *Homer*, but in this passage between *Calypso* and *Ulysses*; and we find that the Poet is not unsuccessful in drawing the tender, as well as the fiercer passions. This seemingly-trifling circumstance is an instance of it; love delights to oblige, and the least offices receive a value from the person who performs them: This is the reason why *Calypso* serves *Ulysses* with her own hands; her Damsels attend her, but love make it a pleasure to her to attend *Ulysses*. *Enstathius*.

Calypso shews more fondness for *Ulysses*, than *Ulysses* for *Calypso*: Indeed *Ulysses* had been no less than seven years in the favour of that Goddess; it was a kind of matrimony, and husbands are not altogether so fond as lovers. But the true reason is, a more tender behaviour had been contrary to the character of *Ulysses*; it is necessary that his stay should be by constraint, that he should continually be endeavouring to return to his own country; and consequently to have discover'd too great a degree of satisfaction in any thing during his absence, had outrag'd his character. His return is the main hinge upon which the whole *Odyssey* turns, and therefore no pleasure, not even a Goddess, ought to divert him from it.

22 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

Before herself were plac'd the cates divine,
Ambrosial banquet, and celestial wine.

255 Their hunger satiate, and their thirst repress,
Thus spoke *Calypso* to her god-like guest.)

Ulysses! (with a sigh she thus began)

Oh sprung from Gods! in wisdom more than man,
Is then thy home the passion of thy heart?

260 Thus wilt thou leave me, are we thus to part?

Farewel! and ever joyful may'st thou be,
Nor break the transport with one thought of me.

But ah *Ulysses*! wert thou giv'n to know
What fate yet dooms thee, yet, to undergo;

265 Thy heart might settle in this scene of ease,
And ev'n these flighted charms might learn to please.

A willing Goddess, and immortal life,

Might banish from thy mind an absent wife.

v. 263. *But ah Ulysses! wert thou giv'n to know
What fate yet dooms thee.*]

This is another instance of the tyranny of the passion of love: *Calypso* had receiv'd a command to dismiss *Ulysses*; *Mercury* had laid before her the fatal consequences of her refusal, and she had promis'd to send him away; but her Love here again prevails over her reason; she frames excuses still to detain him, and though she dares not keep him, she knows not how to part with him. This is a true picture of nature; Love this moment resolves, the next breaks these resolutions: She had promis'd to obey *Jupiter*, in not detaining *Ulysses*; but she endeavours to persuade *Ulysses* not to go away.

Am

Book V. *HOMER's ODYSSEY.* 23 .

Am I inferior to a mortal dame?

- 270 Less soft my feature, less august my frame?
Or shall the daughters of mankind compare
Their earth-born beauties with the heav'nly fair?

Alas! for this (the prudent man replies)

Against *Ulysses* shall thy anger rise?

- 275 Lov'd and ador'd, oh Goddess, as thou art;
Forgive the weakness of a human heart.

Tho' well I see thy graces far above

The dear, tho' mortal, object of my love,
Of youth eternal well the difference know,

- 280 And the short date of fading charms below;
Yet ev'ry day, while absent thus I roam,
I languish to return, and dye at home.

Whate'er the Gods shall destine me to bear
In the black ocean, or the wat'ry war,

- 285 'Tis mine to master with a constant mind;
Enur'd to perils, to the worst resign'd.

v. 277. *Tho' well I see thy graces far above*

The dear, tho' mortal, object of my love.]

Ulysses shews great address in this answer to *Calypso*; he softens the severity of it, by first asking a favourable acceptance of what he is about to say; he calls her his ador'd Goddess, and places *Penelope* in every degree below the perfections of *Calypso*. As it is the nature of woman not to endure a rival, *Ulysses* assigns the desire of his return to another cause than the love of *Penelope*, and ascribes it solely to the love he bears his country. *Eufrathius*.

By

24 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.*

By seas, by wars, so many dangers run,
Still I can suffer; Their high will be done!

Thus while he spoke, the beamy Sun descends;
290 And rising night her friendly shade extends.

To the close grot the lonely pair remove,
And slept delighted with the gifts of love.

When rosy morning call'd them from their rest,
Ulysses robe'd him in the cloak and vest.

295 The nymph's fair head a veil transparent grac'd,
Her swelling loins a radiant Zone embrac'd
With flow'rs of gold, an under robe, unbound,
In snowy waves flow'd glitt'ring on the ground.
Forth-issuing thus, she gave him first to wield

300 A weighty axe, with truest temper steel'd,
And double-edg'd; the handle smooth and plain,
Wrought of the clouded olive's easy grain;
And next, a wedge to drive with sweepy sway:
Then to the neighb'ring forest led the way.

305 On the lone Island's utmost verge there stood
Of poplars, pines, and firs, a lofty wood,
Whose leafless summits to the skies aspire,
Scorch'd by the sun, or fear'd by heav'nly fire:
(Already dry'd.) These pointing out to view,

310 The Nymph just shew'd him, and with tears withdrew.

Now

- Now toils the Heroe; trees on trees o'erthrown
 Fall crackling round him, and the forests groan:
 Sudden, full twenty on the plain are strow'd,
 And lopp'd, and lighten'd of their branchy load.
- 315 At equal angles these dispos'd to join,
 He smooth'd, and squar'd 'em, by the rule and line.
 (The wimbles for the work *Calypso* found)
 With those he pierc'd 'em, and with clinchers bound.
 Long and capacious as a shipwright forms
- 320 Some bark's broad bottom to out-ride the storms,

v. 311, &c. *Ulysses builds his ship.*] This passage has fallen under censure, as outraging all probability: *Rapine* believes it to be impossible for one man alone to build so compleat a vessel in the compass of four days; and perhaps the same opinion might lead *Bossu* into a mistake, who allows twenty days to *Ulysses* in building it; he applies the word *ἴσσοι*, or *twenty*, to the days, which ought to be apply'd to the trees; *δύσπεα* is understood, for the Poet immediately after declares that the whole was compleated in the space of four days; neither is there any thing incredible in the description. I have observ'd already that this vessel is but *Συγία*, a *Float*, or *Raft*; 'tis true, *Ulysses* cuts down twenty trees to build it; this may seem too great a provision of materials for so small an undertaking: But why should we imagine these to be large trees? the description plainly shews the contrary, for it had been impossible to have fell'd twenty large trees in the space of four days, much more to have built a vessel proportionable to such materials: but the vessel was but small, and consequently such were the trees. *Homer* calls these *dry trees*; this is not inserted without reason, for green wood is unfit for Navigation.

Homer in this passage shews his skill in Mechanics; a shipwright could not have describ'd a vessel more exactly: but what is chiefly valuable, is the insight it gives us to what degree this art of ship-building was then arriv'd: We find likewise what use Navigators made of Astronomy in those ages; so that this passage deserves a double regard, as a fine piece of Poetry, and a valuable remain of Antiquity.

26 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

So large he built the Raft: then ribb'd it strong
 From space to space, and nail'd the planks along;
 These form'd the sides: the deck he fashion'd last;
 Then o'er the vessel rais'd the taper mast,
 325 With crossing sail-yards dancing in the wind;
 And to the helm the guiding rudder join'd.
 (With yielding oars fenc'd, to break the force
 Of surging waves, and steer the steady course)
 Thy loom, *Calypso*! for the future sails
 330 Supply'd the cloth, capacious of the gales.

With

v. 317. *The wimbles for the work Calypso found.* and

v. 329. *Thy Loom Calypso for the future sails
 Supply'd the cloth.]*

It is remarkable, that *Calypso* brings the tools to *Ulysses* at several times: this is another instance of the nature of Love; it seeks opportunities to be in the company of the belov'd person. *Calypso* is an instance of it: she frequently goes away, and frequently returns; she delays the time, by not bringing all the implements at once to *Ulysses*; so that tho' she cannot divert him from his resolutions of leaving her, yet she protracts his stay.

It may be necessary to make some observations in general upon this passage of *Calypso* and *Ulysses*. Mr. *Dryden* has been very severe upon it. "What are the tears, says he, of *Calypso* for being left, to the fury and death of *Dido*? Where is there the whole process of her passion, and all its violent effects to be found, in the languishing Episode of the *Odyssees*?" Much may be said in vindication of *Homer*; there is a wide difference between the characters of *Dido* and *Calypso*, *Calypso* is a Goddess, and consequently not liable to the same passions, as an enrag'd woman: yet disappointed love being always an outrageous passion, *Homer* makes her break out into blasphemies against *Jupiter* and all the Gods. "But the same process of love is not found in *Homer* as in *Virgil*;" 'Tis true, and *Homer* had been very injudicious if he had inserted it. The time allows it not; it was necessary for *Ho-*
mer

Book V. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 27

With stays and gordage last he rigg'd the ship,
And roll'd on leavers, launch'd her in the deep.

Four days were pass'd, and now the work compleat
Shone the fifth morn: when from her sacred seat

335 The nymph dismiss him, (od'rous garments giv'n)
And bath'd in fragrant oils that breath'd of heav'n)
Then fill'd two goat-skins with her hands divine,
With water one, and one with sable wine;

mer to describe the conclusion of *Calypso's* passion, not the beginning or process of it. It was necessary to carry on the main design of the Poem, viz. the Departure of *Ulysses*, in order to his re-establishment; and not amuse the Reader with the detail of a passion that was so far from contributing to the end of the Poem, that it was the greatest impediment to it. If the Poet had found an enlargement necessary to his design, had he attempted a full description of the passion, and then fail'd, Mr. *Dryden's* Criticism had been judicious. *Virgil* had a fair opportunity to expatiate, nay the occasion requir'd it, inasmuch as the love of *Dido* contributed to the design of the Poem; it brought about her assistance to *Aeneas*, and the preservation of his companions: and consequently the copiousness of *Virgil* is as judicious as the conciseness of *Homer*. I allow *Virgil's* to be a masterpiece; perhaps no images are more happily drawn in all that Poet; but the passages in the two Authors are not similar, and consequently admit of no comparison: Would it not have been insufferable in *Homer*, to have stepp'd seven years backward, to describe the process of *Calypso's* passion, when the very nature of the Poem requires that *Ulysses* should immediately return to his own country? ought the action to be suspended for a fine description? But an opposite conduct was judicious in both the Poets, and therefore *Virgil* is commendable for giving us the whole process of a love-passion in *Dido*, *Homer* for only relating the conclusion of it in *Calypso*. I will only add that *Virgil* has borrow'd his Machinery from *Homer*, and that the departure of *Aeneas* and *Ulysses* is brought about by the command of *Jupiter*, and the descent of *Mercury*.

28 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

Of ev'ry kind provisions heav'd aboard,
 340 And the full decks with copious viands stor'd.
 The Goddess last a gentle breeze supplies,
 To curl old Ocean, and to warm the skies.
 And now, rejoicing in the prosp'rous gales,
 With beating heart *Ulysses* spreads his sails;
 345 Plac'd at the helm he fate, and mark'd the skies,
 Nor clos'd in sleep his ever-watchful eyes.
 There view'd the *Pleiads*, and the northern Team,
 And great *Orion's* more refulgent beam,
 To which, around the axle of the sky
 350 The Bear revolving, points his golden eye;
 Who shines exalted on th' etherial plain,
 Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.
 Far on the left those radiant fires to keep
 The Nymph directed, as he sail'd the deep.

v. 344. — [*Ulysses spreads his sails.*] It is observable that the Poet passes over the parting of *Calypso* and *Ulysses* in silence; he leaves it to be imagin'd by the Reader, and prosecutes his main action. Nothing but a cold compliment could have proceeded from *Ulysses*, he being overjoy'd at the prospect of returning to his country: it was therefore judicious in *Homer* to omit the relation; and not draw *Calypso* in tears, and *Ulysses* in a transport of joy. Besides, it was necessary to shorten the Episode: the commands of *Jupiter* were immediately to be obey'd; and the story being now turn'd to *Ulysses*, it was requisite to put him immediately upon action, and describe him endeavouring to re-establish his own affairs, which is the whole design of the *Odyssey*.

Full

- 355 Full sev'nteen nights he cut the foamy way;
 The distant land appear'd the following day:
 Then swell'd to fight *Phœcia's* dusky coast,
 And woody mountains, half in vapours lost;
 That lay before him, indistinct and vast.
- 360 Like a broad shield amid the watry waste.

v. 355. *Full sev'nteen nights he cut the foamy way.*] It may seem incredible that one person should be able to manage a vessel seventeen days without any assistance; but *Eustathius* vindicates *Homer* by an instance that very much resembles this of *Ulysses*. A certain *Pamphylian* being taken prisoner, and carried to *Tamiathis* (afterwards *Damietta*) in *Egypt*, continued there several years; but being continually desirous to return to his country, he pretends a skill in sea affairs; this succeeds, and he is immediately employ'd in Maritime business, and permitted the liberty to follow it according to his own inclination, without any inspection. He made use of this opportunity, and furnishing himself with a sail, and provisions for a long voyage, committed himself to the sea all alone; he cross'd that vast extent of waters that lies between *Egypt* and *Pamphylia*, and arriv'd safely in his own country: In memory of this prodigious event he chang'd his name, and was called *μονοπλόος*, or the *sole-sailor*; and the family was not extinct in the days of *Eustathius*.

It may not be improper to observe, that this description of *Ulysses* sailing alone is a demonstration of the smallness of his vessel; for it is impossible that a large one could be managed by a single person. It is indeed said that twenty trees were taken down for the vessel, but this does not imply that all the trees were made use of, but only so much of them as was necessary to his purpose.

v. 360. *Like a broad shield amid the watry waste.*] This expression gives a very lively idea of an Island of small extent, that is, of a form more long than large: *Aristarchus*, instead of *πῖνον*, writes *ῥῖνον*, or resembling a *Fig*; others tell us, that *πῖνον* is used by the *Illyrians* to signify *ἀχλὺς*, or a *Mist*; this likewise very well represents the first appearance of land to those that sail at a distance: it appears indistinct and confus'd, or as it is here express'd, like a *Mist*. *Eustathius*.

30 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

But him, thus voyaging the deeps below,
From far, on *Solymé's* aerial brow,
The King of Ocean saw, and seeing burn'd,
(From *Æthiopia's* happy climes return'd)

365 The raging Monarch shook his azure head,
And thus in secret to his soul he said.

Heav'ns! how uncertain are the Pow'rs on high?
Is then revers'd the sentence of the sky,
In one man's favour? while a distant guest

370 I shar'd secure the *Æthiopian* feast.
Behold how near *Phœacia's* land he draws!
The land, affix'd by Fate's eternal laws

v. 362. From *Solymé's* aerial brow.] There is some difficulty in this passage. *Strabo*, as *Eusebius* observes, affirms that the expression of *Neptune's* seeing *Ulysses* from the mountains of *Solymé*, is to be taken in a general sense, and not to denote the *Solymæan* mountains in *Pisidia*; but other eastern mountains that bear the same appellation. In propriety, the *Solymæans* inhabit the summits of mount *Taurus*, from *Lycia* even to *Pisidia*; these were very distant from the passage of *Neptune* from the *Æthiopians*, and consequently could not be the mountains intended by *Homer*; we must therefore have recourse to the preceding assertion of *Strabo*, for a solution of the difficulty. *Dacier* endeavours to explain it another way: Who knows, says she, but that the name of *Solymæan* was antiently extended to all very elevated mountains? *Bochart* affirms, that the word *Solymi* is deriv'd from the Hebrew *Salem*, or *Darkness*; why then might not this be a general appellation? But this is all conjecture, and it is much more probable that such a name should be given to some mountains by way of distinction and emphatically, from some peculiar and extraordinary quality; than extend it to all very lofty mountains, which could only introduce confusion and error.

To

To end his toils. Is then our anger vain?

No, if this sceptre yet commands the main.

375 He spoke, and high the forky Trident hurl'd,
Rolls clouds on clouds, and stirs the wat'ry world,
At once the face of earth and sea deforms,
Swells all the winds, and rouzes all the storms.
Down rush'd the night. East, west, together roar.

380 And south, and north, roll mountains to the shore,
Then shook the Heroe, to despair resign'd,
And question'd thus his yet-unconquer'd mind!

Wretch that I am! what farther Fates attend
This life of toils, and what my destin'd end?

385 Too well alas! the island Goddess knew,
On the black sea what perils shou'd ensue.
New horrors now this destin'd head enclose;
Unfill'd is yet the measure of my woes.
With what a cloud the brows of heav'n are crown'd?

390 What raging winds? what roaring waters round?
'Tis *Jove* himself the swelling tempest rears;
Death, present death on ev'ry side appears.
Happy! thrice happy! who in battle slain
Prest in *Atrides'* cause the Trojan plain:

Oh

v. 393. *Happy! thrice happy! who in battle slain,
Prest in Atrides' cause the Trojan plain.]*

Plutarch in his *Symposiacs* relates a memorable story concerning *Memmius*,

395 Oh! had I dy'd before that well-fought wall,
 Had some distinguish'd day renown'd my fall;
 (Such as was that, when show'rs of jav'ins fled
 From conqu'ring Troy around *Achilles* dead).

Memmius, the Roman General: When he had sack'd the City *Corinth*, and made slaves of those who surviv'd the ruin of it, he commanded one of the youths of a liberal education to write down some sentence in his presence, according to his own inclinations. The youth immediately wrote this passage from *Homer*.

Happy! thrice happy! who in battle slain,

Preſt in Atreides' cauſe the Trojan plain.

Memmius immediately burſt into tears, and gave the youth and all his relations their liberty.

Virgil has translated this paſſage in the firſt book of his *Æneis*. The ſtorm, and the behaviour of *Æneas*, are copy'd exactly from it. The ſtorm, in both the Poets, is deſcrib'd conciſely, but the images are full of terror; *Homer* leads the way, and *Virgil* treads in his ſteps without any deviation. *Ulyſſes* falls into lamentation, ſo does *Æneas*: *Ulyſſes* wiſhes he had found a nobler death, ſo does *Æneas*: this diſcovers a bravery of ſpirit, they lament not that they are to die, but only the inglorious manner of it. This fully answers an objection that has been made both againſt *Homer* and *Virgil*, who have been blam'd for deſcribing their Heroes with ſuch an air of mean-ſpiritedneſs. Drowning was eſteem'd by the Ancients an accuſed death, as it depriv'd their bodies of the rites of Sepulture; it is therefore no wonder that this kind of death was greatly dreaded, ſince it barr'd their entrance into the happy regions of the dead for many hundreds of years.

v. 397. *Such as was that, when ſhow'rs of jav'ins fled*

From conqu'ring Troy around Achilles dead.]

Theſe words have relation to an Action, no where deſcrib'd in the *Iliad* or *Odſſey*. When *Achilles* was ſlain by the treachery of *Paris*, the *Trojans* made a ſally to gain his body, but *Ulyſſes* carried it off upon his ſhoulders, while *Ajax* protect'd him with his ſhield. The war of *Troy* is not the ſubject of the *Iliad*, and therefore *Homer* relates not the death of *Achilles*; but, as *Longinus* remarks, he inſerts many Actions in the *Odſſey* which are the ſequel of the ſtory of the *Iliad*. This conduct has a very happy effect; he aggrandizes the character of *Ulyſſes* by theſe ſhort hiſtories, and has found out the way to make him praiſe himſelf, without vanity.

All

All *Greece* had paid my solemn fun'ral then,

400 And spread my glory with the sons of men.

A shameful fate now hides my hapless head,

Un-wept, un-noted, and for ever dead!

A mighty wave rush'd o'er him as he spoke,

The Raft it cover'd, and the mast it broke;

405 Swept from the deck, and from the rudder torn,

Far on the swelling surge the chief was born:

While by the howling tempest rent in twain

Flew sail and sail-yards ratling o'er the main.

Long press'd he heav'd beneath the weighty wave,

410 Clogg'd by the cumbrous vest *Calypso* gave:

At length emerging, from his nostrils wide

And gushing mouth, effus'd the briny tyde.

Ev'n then, not mindless of his last retreat,

He seiz'd the Raft, and leapt into his seat,

415 Strong with the fear of death. The rolling flood

Now here, now there, impell'd the floating wood.

As when a heap of gather'd thorns is cast

Now to, now fro, before th'autumnal blast;

Together clung, it rolls around the field;

420 So roll'd the Float, and so its texture held:

And now the south, and now the north, bear sway,

And now the east the foamy floods obey,

And now the west-wind whirls it o'er the sea.

34 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

The wand'ring Chief, with toils on toils oppress'd,

425 *Leucothea* saw, and pity touch'd her breast:

(Herself a mortal once, of *Cadmus*' strain,

But now an azure sister of the main)

Swift as a Sea-mew springing from the flood,

All radiant on the Raft the Goddess stood:

430 Then thus address'd him. Thou, whom heav'n decrees

To *Neptune*'s wrath, stern Tyrant of the Seas,

(Unequal contest) not his rage and pow'r,

Great as he is, such virtue shall devour.

What I suggest thy wisdom will perform;

435 Forsake thy float, and leave it to the storm:

Strip off thy garments; *Neptune*'s fury brave

With naked strength, and plunge into the wave.

V. 424. *The wand'ring Chief, with toils on toils oppress'd,*

Leucothea saw, and pity touch'd her breast.]

It is not probable that *Ulysses* could escape so great a danger by his own strength alone; and therefore the Poet introduces *Leucothea* to assist in his preservation. But it may be ask'd, if this is not contradictory to the command of *Jupiter* in the beginning of this book? *Ulysses* is there forbid all assistance either from men or Gods; whence then is it that *Leucothea* preserves him? The former passage is to be understood to imply an interdiction only of all assistance 'till *Ulysses* was shipwreck'd; he was to suffer, not to die: Thus *Pallas* afterwards calms the storm; she may be imagin'd to have a power over the winds, as she is the daughter of *Jupiter*, who denotes the Air, according to the observation of *Enstathius*: Here *Leucothea* is very properly introduced to preserve *Ulysses*; she is a Sea-Goddess, and had been a mortal, and therefore interests her self in the cause of a mortal.

To

To reach *Phœcia* all thy nerves extend,
There fate decrees thy miseries shall end.

- 440 This heav'nly Scarf beneath thy bosom bind,
And live; give all thy terrors to the wind.
Soon as thy arms the happy shore shall gain,
Return the gift, and cast it in the main;
Observe my orders, and with heed obey.
445 Cast it far off, and turn thy eyes away.

With that, her hand the sacred veil bestows,
Then down the deeps she div'd from whence she rose:

v. 440. *This heav'nly Scarf beneath thy bosom bind.*] This passage may seem extraordinary, and the Poet be thought to preserve *Ulysses* by incredible means. What virtue could there be in this Scarf against the violence of storms? *Eustathius* very well answers this objection. It is evident that the belief of the power of Amulets or Charms prevailed in the times of *Homer*; thus *Moly* is used by *Ulysses* as a preservative against Fascination, and some charm may be supposed to be imply'd in the Zone or Girdle of *Venus*. Thus *Ulysses* may be imagin'd to have worn a scarf, or cincture, as a preservative against the perils of the sea. They consecrated antiently *Votiva*, as tablets, &c. in the temples of their Gods: So *Ulysses*, wearing a Zone consecrated to *Lemnothea*, may be said to receive it from the hands of that Goddess. *Eustathius* observes, that *Lemnothea* did not appear in the form of a Bird, for then how should she speak, or how bring this cincture or scarf? The expression has relation only to the manner of her rising out of the sea, and descending into it; the Action, not the Person, is intended to be represented. Thus *Minerva* is said in the *Odyssey* to fly away, ὅπως αἰετὸν αἰὶνῶνται, not in the form but with the swiftness of an Eagle. Most of the Translators have render'd this passage ridiculously, they describe her in the real form of a sea-fowl, tho' she speaks, and gives her Scarf. So the version of *Habbs*:

She spoke, in figure of a Water-hen.

36 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

A moment snatch'd the shining form away,
And all was cover'd with the curling sea.

450 Struck with amaze, yet still to doubt inclin'd,
He stands suspended, and explores his mind.
What shall I do? Unhappy me! who knows
But other Gods intend me other woes?
Whoe'er thou art, I shall not blindly join
455 Thy pleaded reason, but consult with mine:
For scarce in ken appears that distant Isle
Thy voice foretells me shall conclude my toil.
Thus then I judge: while yet the planks sustain
The wild waves fury, here I fix'd remain:

v. 454. ————— I shall not blindly join

Thy pleaded reason. —————]

Enslathins observes, that this passage is a lesson to instruct us, that second reflections are preferable to our first thoughts; and the Poet maintains the character of *Ulysses* by describing him thus doubtful and cautious. But is not *Ulysses* too incredulous, who will not believe a Goddess? and disobedient to her, by not committing himself to the seas? *Leucothea* does not confine *Ulysses* to an immediate compliance with her injunctions; she indeed commands him to forsake the Raft, but leaves the Time to his own discretion: And *Ulysses* might very justly be somewhat incredulous, when he knew that *Neptune* was his enemy, and contriving his destruction. The doubts therefore of *Ulysses* are the doubts of a wise man: But then, is not *Ulysses* describ'd with a greater degree of prudence, than the Goddess? she commands him to leave the Raft, he chuses to make use of it 'till he arrives nearer the shores. *Enslathins* directly ascribes more wisdom to *Ulysses* than to *Leucothea*. This may appear too partial; it is sufficient to observe, that the command of *Leucothea* was general and left the manner of the execution of it to his own prudence.

But

160 But when their texture to the tempest yields,
I launch advent'rous on the liquid fields,
Join to the help of Gods the strength of man,
And take this method, since the best I can.

While thus, his thoughts an anxious council hold,
465 The raging God a wat'ry mountain roll'd;
Like a black sheet the whelming billow spread,
Burst o'er the float, and thunder'd on his head.
Planks, Beams, dis-parted fly: the scatter'd wood
Rolls diverse, and in fragments strows the flood.

470 So the rude *Boreas*, o'er the field new shorn,
Tosses and drives the scatter'd heaps of corn.
And now a single beam the Chief bestrides;
There, pois'd a while above the bounding tydes,
His limbs dis-cumbers of the clinging vest,

475 And binds the sacred cincture round his breast:
Then prone on Ocean in a moment flung,
Stretch'd wide his eager arms, and shot the seas along.
All naked now, on heaving billows laid,
Stern *Neptune* ey'd him, and contemptuous said:

480 Go, learn'd in woes, and other woes essay!
Go, wander helpless on the wat'ry way:
Thus, thus find out the destin'd shore, and then
(If *Jove* ordains it) mix with happier men.

What-

38 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

Whate'er thy Fate, the ills our wrath could raise
485 Shall last remember'd in thy best of days.

This said, his sea-green floods divide the foam,
And reach high *Æge* and the tow'ry dome.

Now, scarce withdrawn the fierce Earth-shaking
pow'r,

Jove's daughter *Pallas* watch'd the fav'ring hour.

490 Back to their caves she bad the winds to fly,
And hush'd the blust'ring brethren of the sky.
The dryer blasts alone of *Boreas* sway,
And bear him soft on broken waves away;
With gentle force impelling to that shore,

495 Where Fate has destin'd he shall toil no more.
And now two nights, and now two days were past,
Since wide he wander'd on the wat'ry waste;
Heav'd on the surge with intermitting breath,
And hourly panting in the arms of death.

v. 496. *And now two nights, and now two days were past.*] It may be thought incredible that any person should be able to contend so long with a violent storm, and at last survive it: It is allow'd that this could scarce be done by the natural strength of *Ulysses*; but the Poet has soften'd the narration, by ascribing his preservation to the cincture of *Leucothea*. The Poet likewise very judiciously removes *Neptune*, that *Ulysses* may not appear to be preserv'd against the power of that God; and to reconcile it entirely to credibility, he introduces *Pallas*, who calms the winds and composes the waves, to make way for his preservation.

The

500 The third fair morn now blaz'd upon the main;
Then glassy smooth lay all the liquid plain;
The winds were hush'd, the billows scarcely curl'd,
And a dead silence still'd the wat'ry world.

When lifted on a ridgy wave, he spies

505 The land at distance, and with sharpen'd eyes.

As pious children joy with vast delight
When a lov'd Sire revives before their sight,
(Who ling'ring long has call'd on death in vain,
Fixt by some Dæmon to his bed of pain,

Till

v. 506. *As pious children joy with vast delight.*] This is a very beautiful comparison, and well adapted to the occasion. We mistake the intention of it, as *Eustathius* observes, if we imagine that *Homer* intended to compare the person of *Ulysses* to these children: It is introduc'd solely to express the joy which he conceives at the sight of land; if we look upon it in any other view, the resemblance is lost; for the children suffer not themselves, but *Ulysses* is in the utmost distress. These Images drawn from common life are particularly affecting; they have relation to every man as every man may possibly be in such circumstances: other Images may be more noble, and yet less pleasing; They may raise our admiration, but those engage our affections.

v. 509. *Fix'd by some Dæmon to his bed of pain.*] It was a prevailing opinion among the Ancients, that the Gods were the authors of all diseases incident to mankind. *Hippocrates* himself confesses that he had found some distempers, in which the hand of the Gods was manifest, *Διὸς τι*, as *Dacier* observes. In this place this assertion has a peculiar beauty, it shews that the malady was not contracted by any vice of the father, but inflicted by an evil Dæmon. Nothing is more evident, than that every person was suppos'd by the Ancients to have a good and a bad Dæmon attending him; what the *Greeks* call'd a Dæmon, the *Romans* named a *Genius*. I confess that this is no where directly affirm'd in *Homer*, but as *Plutarch* observes, it is plainly intimated. In the second book

§10 'Till heav'n by miracle his life restore)
 So joys *Ulysses* at th' appearing shore;
 And sees (and labours onward as he sees)
 The rising forests, and the tufted trees.

And now, as near approaching as the sound
 §15 Of human voice the list'ning ear may wound,
 Amidst the rocks he hears a hollow roar
 Of murm'ring surges breaking on the shore:
 Nor peaceful port was there, nor winding bay,
 To shield the vessel from the rowling sea;

§20 But cliffs, and shaggy shores, a dreadful sight!
 All rough with rocks, with foamy billows white.
 Fear seiz'd his slacken'd limbs and beating heart;
 As thus he commun'd with his soul apart.

Ah me! when o'er a length of waters tost,
 §25 These eyes at last behold th' unhop'd-for coast,

No

book of the *Iliad* the word is used both in a good and bad sense; when *Ulysses* addresses himself to the Generals of the army, he says *Δαίμον*, in the better sense; and immediately afterwards he uses it to denote a coward,

iv

Δαίμονι ἀτρέμας ἦεν.

This is a strong evidence, that the notion of good and bad Demons was believ'd in the days of *Homer*.

[v. 524. *Ah me! when o'er a length of waters tost.*] *Ulysses* in this place calls as it were a council in his own breast; considers his danger, and how to free himself from it. But it may be ask'd if it be probable that he should have leisure for such a consultation,

Book V. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 41

No port receives me from the angry main,
But the loud deeps demand me back again.
Above, sharp rocks forbid access; around
Roar the wild waves; beneath, is sea profound!

530 No footing sure affords the faithless sand,
To stem too rapid, and too deep to stand.
If here I enter, my efforts are vain,
Dash'd on the cliffs, or heav'd into the main;
Or round the Island if my course I bend,

535 Where the ports open, or the shores descend,
Back to the seas the rowling surge may sweep,
And bury all my hopes beneath the deep.
Or some enormous whale the God may send,
(For many such on *Amphitrite* attend)

540 Too well the turns of mortal chance I know,
And hate relentless of my heav'nly foe.

tion, in the time of such imminent danger? The answer is, that nothing could be more happily imagin'd, to exalt his character: He is drawn with a great presence of mind, in the most desperate circumstances; fear does not prevail over his reason; his wisdom dictates the means of his preservation; and his bravery of spirit supports him in the accomplishment of it.

The Poet is also very judicious in the management of the speech; it is concise, and therefore proper to the occasion, there being no leisure for prolixity; every Image is drawn from the situation of the place, and his present condition; he follows Nature, and Nature is the foundation of true Poetry.

While

42 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

While thus he thought, a monstrous wave up-bore
The Chief, and dash'd him on the craggy shore:

Torn was his skin, nor had the ribs been whole,

545 But instant *Pallas* enter'd in his soul.

Close to the cliff with both his hands he clung,

And stuck adherent, and suspended hung:

'Till the huge surge roll'd off. Then backward sweep

The reflux tydes, and plunge him in the deep.

550 As when the *Polypus* from forth his cave

Torn with full force, reluctant beats the wave,

His

v. 550. *As when the Polypus.*] It is very surprizing to see the prodigious variety with which *Homer* enlivens his Poetry: he rises or falls as his subject leads him, and finds allusions proper to represent an Heroe in battle, or a person in calamity. We have here an instance of it; he compares *Ulysses* to a *Polypus*; the similitude is suited to the element, and to the condition of the person. It is observable, that this is the only full description of a person shipwreck'd in all his Poems: he therefore gives a loose to his imagination, and enlarges upon it very copiously. There appears a surprizing fertility of invention thro' the whole of it: In what a variety of attitudes is *Ulysses* drawn, during the storm, and at his escape from it? his soliloquies in the turns of his condition, while he is sometimes almost out of danger, and then again involv'd in new difficulties, engage our hopes and fears. He ennobles the whole by his machinery, and *Neptune*, *Pallas* and *Leucothea* interest themselves in his safety or destruction. He has likewise chosen the most proper occasion for a copious description; there is leisure for it. The proposition of the Poem requires him to describe a man of sufferings in the person of *Ulysses*: he therefore no sooner introduces him, but he throws him into the utmost calamities, and describes them largely, to shew at once the greatness of his distress, and his wisdom and patience under it. In what are the sufferings of *Aeneas* in *Virgil* comparable to these of *Ulysses*? *Aeneas* suffers little personally in comparison of *Ulysses*, his incidents have

Book V. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 43

His ragged claws are stuck with stones and sands;
So the rough rock had shagg'd *Ulysses'* hands.
And now had perish'd, whelm'd beneath the main,

555 Th' unhappy man; ev'n Fate had been in vain:

But all-subduing *Pallas* lent her pow'r,
And Prudence sav'd him in the needful hour.
Beyond the beating surge his course he bore,
(A wider circle, but in sight of shore)

560 With longing eyes, observing, to survey
Some smooth ascent, or safe-sequester'd bay.
Between the parting rocks at length he spy'd
A falling stream with gentler waters glide;
Where to the seas the shelving shore declin'd,

565 And form'd a bay, impervious to the wind.
To this calm port the glad *Ulysses* prest,
And hail'd the river, and its God address'd.

Whoe'er thou art, before whose stream unknown
I bend, a suppliant at thy wat'ry throne,

570 Hear, azure King! nor let me fly in vain
To thee from *Neptune* and the raging main.

have less variety, and consequently less beauty. *Homer* draws his Images from Nature, but embellishes those Images with the utmost Art, and fruitfulness of invention.

Heav'n

44 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

Heav'n hears and pities hapless men like me,

For sacred ev'n to Gods is Misery:

Let then thy waters give the weary rest,

575 And save a suppliant, and a man distressed.

He pray'd, and strait the gentle stream subsides,

Detains the rushing current of his tydes,

Before the wand'rer smooths the wat'ry way,

And soft receives him from the rowling sea.

580 That moment, fainting as he touch'd the shore,

He dropt his finewy arms: his knees no more

Perform'd

v. 573. *For sacred ev'n to Gods is Misery.*] This expression is bold, yet reconcileable to truth: Heav'n in reality has regard to the misery and affliction of good men, and at last delivers them from it. *Res est sacra miser*, as *Dacier* observes; and *Seneca*, in his dissertation on Providence, speaks to this purpose, *Ecce spectaculum dignum ad quod respiciat, intentus operi suo, Deus! Ecce par Deo dignum, vir fortis cum malâ fortunâ compositus*: Misery is not always a punishment, but sometimes a tryal: This is agreeable to true Theology.

v. 578. *Before the wand'rer smooths the watry way.*] Such passages as these are bold, yet beautiful. Poetry animates every thing, and turns Rivers into Gods. But what occasion is there for the intervention of this River-God to smooth the waters, when *Pallas* had already compos'd both the seas and the storms? The words in the original solve the objection, *πρόσθε δὲ οἱ ποῖνοι γαλήνην*, or *smooth'd the way before him*, that is, his own current: the actions therefore are different; *Pallas* gives a general calmness to the Sea, the River-God to his own current.

v. 581. *He dropp'd his finewy arms: his knees no more Perform'd their office.*]

Enstathius appears to me to give this passage a very forc'd interpretation; he imagines that the Poet, by saying that *Ulysses* bent his knees and arms, spoke philosophically, and intended to express that he contracted his limbs, that had been fatigued with the long
exten-

Book V. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 45

Perform'd their office, or his weight upheld:
His swoln heart heav'd; his bloated body swell'd;
From mouth and nose the briny torrent ran;

585 And lost in lassitude lay all the man,
Depriv'd of voice, of motion, and of breath;
The soul scarce waking, in the arms of death;
Soon as warm life its wonted office found,
The mindful chief *Leucothea's* scarf unbound;

590 Observant of her word, he turn'd aside
His head, and cast it on the rolling tyde.
Behind him far, upon the purple waves
The waters waft it, and the nymph receives.

Now parting from the stream, *Ulysses* found

595 A mossy bank with pliant rushes crown'd;
The bank he press'd, and gently kiss'd the ground.
Where on the flow'ry herb as soft he lay,
Thus to his soul the Sage began to say.

What will ye next ordain, ye Pow'rs on high!

600 And yet, ah yet, what fates are we to try?

extension in swimming, by a voluntary remission; lest they should grow stiff, and lose their natural faculty. But this is an impossibility: How could this be done, when he is speechless, fainting, without pulse and respiration? Undoubtedly *Homer*, as *Dacier* observes, means by the expression of *ἵνα μὴ γένηται καὶ χεῖρας*, no more than that his limbs fail'd him, or he fainted. If the Action was voluntary, it implies that he intended to refresh them, for *γένην χαμῆν* is generally used in that sense by *Homer*; if involuntarily, it signifies he fainted.

Here

46 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY*. Book V.

Here by the stream, if I the night out-wear,
Thus spent already, how shall nature bear
The dews descending, and nocturnal air?
Or chilly vapours breathing from the flood

605 When Morning rises? If I take the wood,
And in thick shelter of innum'rous boughs
Enjoy the comfort gentle sleep allows;
Tho' fenc'd from cold, and tho' my toil be past,
What savage beasts may wander in the waste?

610 Perhaps I yet may fall a bloody prey
To prowling bears, or lions in their way.
Thus long debating in himself he stood:
At length he took the passage to the Wood,
Whose shady horrors on a rising brow

615 Wav'd high, and frown'd upon the stream below.
There grew two Olives, closest of the grove,
With roots intwin'd, and branches interwove;
Alike their leaves, but not alike they smil'd
With sister-fruits; one fertile, one was wild.

620 Nor here the sun's meridian rays had pow'r,
Nor wind sharp-piercing, nor the rushing show'r:
The verdant Arch so close its texture kept:
Beneath this covert, great *Ulysses* crept.

OF

Of gather'd leaves an ample bed he made,

25 (Thick strown by tempest thro' the bow'ry shade)

Where three at least might winter's cold defy,

Tho' Boreas rag'd along th' inclement sky.

This store, with joy the patient Heroe found,

And sunk amidst 'em, heap'd the leaves around.

30 As some poor peasant, fated to reside

Remote from neighbours, in a forest wide,

Studious to save what human wants require,

In embers-heap'd, preserves the seeds of fire:

Hid in dry foliage thus *Ulysses* lyes,

35 'Till *Pallas* pour'd soft slumbers on his eyes;

v. 630. *As some poor peasant, fated to reside
Remote from neighbours.*]

Homer is very happy in giving dignity to low Images. What can be more unpromising than this comparison, and what more successfully executed? *Ulysses*, in whom remains as it were but a spark of life, the vital heat being extinguish'd by the shipwreck, is very justly compar'd to a brand, that retains only some small remains of fire; the leaves that cover *Ulysses*, are represented by the embers, and the preservation of the fire all night, paints the revival of his spirits by the repose of the night; the expression,

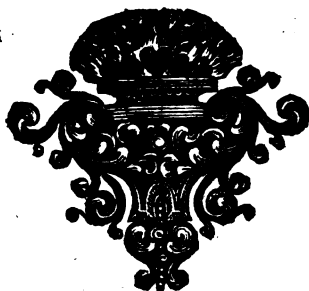
———⁸ ⁹*Fated to reside
Remote from neighbours,*

is not added in vain; it gives, as *Eusebius* further observes, an air of credibility to the allusion, as if it had really been drawn from some particular observation; a person that lives in a desert being oblig'd to such circumstantial cares, where it is impossible to have a supply, for want of neighbours. Homer literally calls these remains *the seeds of fire*; *Æschylus* in his *Prometheus* calls a spark of fire *αὐτὸς ὀρυγν*, or a fountain of fire; less happily in my judgment, the ideas of fire and water being contradictory.

48 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book V.

And golden dreams (the gift of sweet repose)
Lull'd all his cares, and banish'd all his woes.

The Conclusion.] This book begins with the seventh day, and comprehends the space of twenty five days; the first of which is taken up in the message of *Mercury*, and interview between *Calypso* and *Ulysses*; the four following in the building of the vessel; eighteen before the storm, and two after it. So that one and thirty days are completed, since the opening of the Poem.



THE



*Minerva appears to Nausicaa, & orders her
to Wash her garments in the River.*

Fourdrinier Sculp.

THE
SIXTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

VOL. II.

D



The A R G U M E N T.

Pallas appearing in a dream to Nauficæa, (the daughter of Alcinous King of Phæacia) commands her to descend to the river, and wash the robes of State, in preparation to her nuptials. Nauficæa goes with her Handmaids to the river; where, while the garments are spread on the bank, they divert themselves in sports. Their Voices awake Ulysses, who addressing himself to the Princess, is by her relieved and clothed, and receives directions in what manner to apply to the King and Queen of the Island.

T H E

T H E
S I X T H B O O K
O F T H E
O D Y S S E Y.

WHILE thus the weary Wand'rer sunk to rest,
 And peaceful slumbers calm'd his anxious breast;
 The martial Maid from heav'n's aerial height
 Swift to *Phaacia* wing'd her rapid flight.
 5 In elder times the soft *Phafrican* train
 In ease possess'd the wide *Hyperian* plain;
 'Till the *Cyclopean* race in arms arose,
 A lawless nation of gygantic foes:
 Then great *Nausithous* from *Hyperia* far
 10 Thro' seas retreating from the sound of war,

D 2

The

32 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

The recreant nation to fair *Scheria* led,

Where never science rear'd her lawrel'd head:

There round his tribes a strength of wall he rais'd,

To heav'n the glitt'ring domes and temples blaz'd;

V. 12. *Where never science rear'd her lawrel'd head.*] The *Phaicians* having a great share in the succeeding parts of the *Odyssey*, it may not be improper to enlarge upon their character. *Homer* has here describ'd them very distinctly: he is to make use of the *Phaicians* to convey *Ulysses* to his country, he therefore by this short character, gives the Reader such an Image of them, that he is not surpriz'd at their credulity and simplicity, in believing all those fabulous recitals which *Ulysses* makes in the Progress of the Poem. The place likewise in which he describes them is well chosen; it is before they enter upon Action, and by this method we know what to expect from them, and see how every action is naturally suited to their character.

Bossu observes that the Poet has inserted this verse with great judgment: *Ulysses*, says he, knew that the *Phaicians* were simple and credulous; and that they had all the qualities of a lazy people, who admire nothing so much as romantic adventures: he therefore pleases them by recitals suited to their own humour: But even here the Poet is not unmindful of his more understanding Readers, and the truth intended to be taught by way of moral is, that a soft and effeminate life breaks the spirit, and renders it incapable of manly sentiments or actions.

Plutarch seems to understand this verse in a different manner; he quotes it in his dissertation upon Banishment, to shew that *Nausithous* made his people happy tho' he left his own country, and settled them far from the commerce of mankind, *εὐκτα ἀνδρῶν ἀλφειῶν*, without any particular view to the *Phaicians*, which was undoubtedly intended by *Homer*; those words being a kind of a Preface to their general character.

This *Phaacia* of the ancients is the Island now called *Corfu*. The Inhabitants of it were a Colony of the *Hyperians*: *Basilius* remarks, that it has been a question whether *Hyperia* were a City or an Island; he judges it to be a City: it was infested by the *Cyclops*; but they had no shipping, as appears from the tenth of the *Odyssey*, and consequently if it had been an Island, they could not have molested the *Phaicians*; he therefore concludes it to be a City, afterwards call'd *Camarina* in *Sicily*.

Mr. *Barnes* has here added a verse that is not to be found in any other edition; and I have render'd it in the translation.

Just

15 Just to his realms, he parted grounds from grounds,
And shar'd the lands, and gave the lands their bounds:
Now in the silent grave the Monarch lay,
And wise *Alcinous* held the regal sway.

To his high palace thro' the fields of air
20 The Goddesses shot; *Ulysses* was her care.
There, as the night in silence roll'd away,
A heav'n of charms divine *Nausicaa* lay:
Thro' the thick gloom the shining portals blaze;
Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a Grace.

25 Light as the viewless air, the warrior Maid
Glides thro' the valves, and hovers round her head;
A fav'rite virgin's blooming form she took,
From *Dymas* sprung, and thus the vision spoke:

Oh indolent! to waste thy hours away!

30 And sleep'st thou, careless of the bridal day?

v. 24. *Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a Grace.*] The Poet, as *Eustathius* observes, celebrates the beauty of these two attending Virgins to raise their characters, that they may not be esteem'd common servants, or the Poet thought extravagant when he compares *Nausicaa* and her damsels to *Diana* and her nymphs.

The judgment with which he introduces the vision is remarkable: In the *Iliad*, when he is to give an air of importance to his vision, he clothes it in the likeness of *Nestor*, the wisest person of the Army; a man of less consideration had been unsuitable to the greatness of the occasion, which was to persuade Kings and Heroes. Here the Poet sends a vision to a young Lady, under the resemblance of a young Lady: he adapts the circumstances to the person, and describes the whole with an agreeable propriety.

Eustathius.

D 3

Thy

Thy spousal ornament neglected lies;
 Arise, prepare the bridal train, arise!
 A just applause the cares of dress impart,
 And give soft transport to a parent's heart.

Haste,

v. 31. *The spousal ornament neglected lies;
 Arise, prepare the bridal train.]*

Here is a remarkable custom of Antiquity. *Eustathius* observes, that it was usual for the bride to give changes of dress to the friends of the bridegroom at the celebration of the marriage, and *Homer* directly affirms it. *Dacier* quotes a passage in *Judges* concerning *Sampson's* giving changes of garments at his marriage feast, as an instance of the like custom amongst the *Israelites*; but I believe, if there was such a custom at all amongst them, it is not evident from the passage alledg'd: Nothing is plainer, than that *Sampson* had not given the garments, if his riddle had not been expounded: nay, instead of giving, he himself had receiv'd them, if it had not been interpreted. I am rather of opinion that what is said of *Sampson*, has relation to another custom amongst the Ancients, of proposing an *Ænigma* at festivals, and adjudging a reward to him that solv'd it. These the *Greeks* call'd *γρίφες συμποτικές*; *griphos convivales*; *Athenaus* has a long dissertation about this practice in his tenth book, and gives a number of instances of the *Ænigmatical* propositions in use at *Athens*, and of the forfeitures and rewards upon the solution, and non-solution of them; and *Eustathius* in the tenth book of the *Odyssey* comes into the same opinion. So that if it was a custom amongst the *Israelites* as well as *Greeks* to give garments, (as it appears to be to give other gifts) this passage is no instance of it: It is indeed a proof that the *Hebrews* as well as *Greeks* had a custom of entertaining themselves at their festivals, with these *griphi convivales*: I therefore believe that these changes of garments were no more than rewards or forfeits, according to the success in the interpretation.

v. 33. *A just applause the cares of dress impart.]* It is very probable that *Quintilian* had this verse in his view when he wrote *Cultus magnificus addit hominibus, ut Græce versu testatum est, auctoritatem*. His words are almost a translation of it.

Ἐκ γὰρ τοι τέτων φάτις ἀνδράπυς ἀνελάνη,
 Ἐοῖδ' ἄν.

What

35 Haste, to the limpid stream direct thy way,

When the gay morn unveils her smiling ray:

Haste to the stream! companion of thy care

Lo I thy steps attend, thy labours share.

Virgin awake! the marriage hour is nigh,

40 See! from their thrones thy kindred monarchs sigh!

What I would chiefly observe is the propriety with which this commendation of dress is introduc'd; it is put into the mouth of a young Lady (for so *Pallas* appears to be) to whose character it is suitable to delight in Ornament. It likewise agrees very well with the description of the *Phæacians*, whose chief happiness consisted in dancing, dressing, singing, &c. Such a commendation of ornament would have been improper in the mouth of a Philosopher, but beautiful when spoken by a young Lady to *Alcinous*.

v. 35. *Haste, to the limpid stream.*] This passage has not escap'd the raillery of the Critics; *Homer*, say they, brings the Goddess of Wisdom down from heaven, only to advise *Nausicaa* to make haste to wash her cloaths against her wedding: what necessity is there for a conduct so extraordinary upon so trivial an occasion? *Enstathius* sufficiently answers the objection, by observing that the Poet very naturally brings about the safety of *Ulysses* by it; the action of the washing is the means, the protection of *Ulysses* the end of the descent of that Goddess; so that she is not introduced lightly, or without contributing to an important action: And it must be allow'd, that the means made use of are very natural; they grow out of the occasion, and at once give the fable a poetical turn, and an air of probability.

It has been further objected, that the Poet gives an unworthy employment to *Nausicaa*, the daughter of a King; but such Critics form their idea of ancient, from modern greatness: It wou'd be now a meanness to describe a person of Quality thus employ'd; because custom has made it the work of persons of low condition: It would be now thought dishonourable for a Lady of bright station to attend the flocks; yet we find in the most ancient history extant, that the daughters of *Laban* and *Jethro*, persons of power and distinction, were so employ'd, without any dishonour to their quality. In short, these passages are to be look'd upon as exact pictures of the old World, and consequently as valuable remains of Antiquity.

The royal car at early dawn obtain,
And order mules obedient to the rein;
For rough the way, and distant rolls the wave
Where their fair vests *Phaæcian* virgins lave.

45 In pomp ride forth; for pomp becomes the great,
And Majesty derives a grace from State.

Then to the Palaces of heav'n she sails,
Incumbent on the wings of wafting gales;

The

v. 41. *The royal car obtain.*] It would have been an impropriety to have render'd ἄμαξαν by the word chariot; *Homer* seems industriously to avoid ἄρμα, but constantly uses ἀρῖον, or ἄμαξα; this car was drawp by mules; whereas, observes *Eustathius*, the chariot or ἄρμα was proper only for horses. The word Car takes in the Idea of any other vehicle, as well as of a Chariot.

This passage has undergone a very severe censure, as mean and ridiculous, chiefly from the expressions to her father afterwards, ὕψιστον, σφαῖλον: which being render'd, *high, and round*, disgrace the Author: No person, I believe, would ask a father to lend his high and round Car; nor has *Homer* said it: *Eustathius* observes, that σφαῖλος is the same as εὐτροχος κύκλα λόγους οἱ τροχόν, or wheels; and that ὑπερτερία, is τὸ ἐπιμαίμενον τετραγώνον πλῆθος τοῦ ἄξου, or the quadrangular body of the Car that rests upon the axle of it; this fully answers the Criticism: *Nausicaa* describes the Car so particularly, to distinguish it from a Chariot, which had been improper for her purpose: The other part of the objection, concerning the roundness of the Car, is a mistake in the Critic; the word having relation to the wheels, and not to the body of it, which, as *Eustathius* observes, was quadrangular.

v. 47. *Then to the Palaces of heav'n she sails.*] *Lucretius* has copy'd this fine passage, and equall'd, if not surpass'd the original.

*Apparet Divum numen, sedesque quæta.
Quas neque concutiunt venti, neque nubila nimbis
Aspergunt, neque nix acri concreta pruina*

Cana

- The seat of Gods, the regions mild of peace,
 50 Full joy, and calm Eternity of ease.
 There no rude winds presume to shake the skies,
 No rains descend, no snowy vapours rise;
 But on immortal thrones the blest repose:
 The firmament with living splendors glows.
 55 Hither the Goddess wing'd th' aereal way,
 Thro' heav'n's eternal gates that blaz'd with day.
 Now from her rosy car *Aurora* shed
 The dawn, and all the orient flam'd with red.
 Uprose the virgin with the morning light,
 60 Obedient to the vision of the night.
 The Queen she sought: the Queen her hours bestow'd
 In curious works; the whirling spindle glow'd

*Cana cadens violat: semperque innabilis aether
 Integit, & large diffuso lumina ridet.*

The picture is the same in both Authors, but the colouring in my opinion is less beautiful in *Homer* than *Laurens*: the three last lines in particular are fuller of ornament, and the very verses have an air of the serenity they were intended to paint.

v. 61. ———— *The Queen her hours bestow'd*

In curious works.

This is another image of ancient life: We see a Queen amidst her attendants at work at the dawn of day: *de nocte surrexiss, & digiti ejus apprehenderant fusum*. This is a practice as contrary to the manners of our ages, as the other of washing the robes: 'Tis the more remarkable in this Queen, because she liv'd amongst an idle effeminate people, that lov'd nothing but pleasures. *Doier*.

58 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

With crimson threads, while busy damsels cull
The snowy fleece, or twist the purpled wool.

65 Mean-time *Phœcia's* peers in council sate;
From his high dome the King descends in state,
Then with a filial awe the royal maid
Approach'd him passing, and submissive said;
Will my dread Sire his ear regardful deign,

70 And may his child the royal car obtain?
Say, with thy garments shall I bend my way-
Where thro' the vales the mazy waters stray?
A dignity of dress adorns the great,
And Kings draw lustre from the robe of state.

75 Five sons thou hast; three wait the bridal day,
And spotless robes become the young and gay:
So when with praise amid the dance they shine,
By these my cares adorn'd, that praise is mine.

Thus she: but blushes ill-restrain'd betray

80 Her thoughts intentive on the bridal day:
The conscious Sire the dawning blush survey'd,
And smiling thus bespoke the blooming maid.
My child, my darling joy, the car receive;
That, and, what'er our daughter asks, we give.

85 Swift at the royal nod th' attending train
The car prepare, the mules incessant rein.

The

Book VI. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 59

The blooming virgin with dispatchful cares

Tunics, and stoles, and robes imperial bears.

The Queen, assiduous, to her train assigns

90 The sumptuous viands, and the flav'rous wines.

The train prepare a cruise of curious mold,

A cruise of fragrance, form'd of burnish'd gold;

Odour divine! whose soft refreshing streams

Sleek the smooth skin, and scent the snowy limbs.

95 Now mounting the gay seat, the filken reins

Shine in her hand: Along the founding plains

Swift

v. 88. *Tunics, and stoles, and robes imperial bears.*] It is not without reason that the Poet describes *Nausicaa* carrying the whole wardrobe of the family to the river: he inserts these circumstances so particularly, that she may be able to cloath *Ulysses* in the sequel of the story: he further observes the modesty and simplicity of these early times, when the whole dress of a King and his family (who reign'd over a people that delighted in dress) is without gold: for we see *Nausicaa* carries with her all the habits that were used at the greatest solemnities; which had they been wrought with gold could not have been washed. *Erstathius*.

v. 95. *Now mounting the gay seat, &c.*] This Image of *Nausicaa* riding in her Car to the river, has exercis'd the pencils of excellent Painters. *Pausanias* in his fifth book, which is the first of the *Eliacs*, speaks of a picture of two Virgins drawn by Mules, of which the one guides the reins, the other has her head cover'd with a veil; It is believ'd that it represents *Nausicaa*, the daughter of *Alcinous*, going with one of her virgins to the river. The words of *Pausanias* have caused some doubt with relation to the picture; he says, ἐνὶ ἡμιόνων, or upon Mules, but *Homer* describes her upon a Car; how then can *Nausicaa* be intended by the Painter? But *Romulus Amasæus*, who comments upon *Pausanias*, solves the difficulty, by observing that ἐνὶ ἡμιόνων does not signify upon Mules, but a Car drawn by Mules, by a figure frequent in all Authors. *Pliny* is also thus to be understood in his 35th book; *Pro-*

60 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

Swift fly the mules: nor rode the nymph alone,
Around, a bevy of bright damsels shone.

They seek the cisterns where *Phaæcian* dames

100 Wash their fair garments in the limpid streams;

Where gathering into depth from falling rills,

The lucid wave a spacious basin fills.

The

rogens the *Rhodian* painted at *Athens Paralus*, and likewise *Hemionida*, who is said to represent *Nausicaa*; *Hemionida* is used (as *Hermolaus Barbarus* observes upon that passage) as a term of art to express a Virgin riding upon, or more properly drawn by Mules, or ἐπὶ ἡμιόνων. *Spondanus*.

v. 101. *Where gathering into depth from falling rills,
The lucid wave a spacious basin fills.*]

It is evident, that the Ancients had basins, or cisterns, continually supply'd by the rivers for this business of washing; they were call'd, observes *Enstathius*, ἀλυνεῖ, or βόθρος; and were sometimes made of marble, other times of wood. Thus in the *Iliad*, book 22^d.

*Each gushing font a marble cistern fills,
Whose polish'd bed receives the falling rills,
Where Trojan dames ere yet alarm'd by Greece,
Wash'd their fair garments in the days of peace.*

The manner of washing was different from what is now in use: They trod them with their feet, Ζαῖνον, ἐπὶνον τοῖς ποσὶ.

Enstathius.

It may be thought that these customs are of small importance, and of little concern to the present ages: It is true; but Time has stamp'd a value upon them: like ancient Medals, their intrinsic worth may be small, but yet they are valuable, because images of Antiquity.

Plutarch in his *Symposiacs* proposes this question, Why *Nausicaa* washes in the river, rather than the sea, tho' it was more nigh, more hot, and consequently more fit for the purpose than the river? *Theon* answers from *Aristotle*, that the sea-water has many gross, rough, and earthy particles in it, as appears from its saltness, whereas fresh water is more pure and unmixed, and consequently

The mules unharness'd range beside the main,
Or crop the verdant herbage of the plain.

105 Then æmulous the royal robes they lave,
And plunge the vestures in the cleansing wave:
(The vestures cleans'd o'erspread the shelly sand,
Their snowy lustre whitens all the strand.)
Then with a short repast relieve their toil,

110 And o'er their limbs diffuse ambrosial oil:
And while the robes imbibe the solar ray,
O'er the green mead the sporting virgins play:
(Their shining veils unbound.) Along the skies
Toft, and retoft, the ball incessant flies.

115 They sport, they feast; *Nausicaa* lifts her voice,
And warbling sweet, makes earth and heav'n rejoice.

As when o'er *Erymanth* *Diana* roves,
Or wide *Tægetus*' resounding groves;

A syl-

quently more suble and penetrating, and fitter for use in washing. *Themistocles* dislikes this reason, and affirms that sea-water being more rough and earthy, than that of rivers, is therefore the most proper, for its cleansing quality; this appears from observation, for in washing, alhes, or some such substance are thrown into the fresh water to make it effectual, for those particles open the pores, and conduce to the effect of cleansing. The true reason then is, that there is an unctuous nature in sea-water, (and *Aristotle* confesses all salt to be unctuous) which hinders it from cleansing: whereas river-water is pure, less mixt, and consequently more suble and penetrating, and being free from all oily substance, is preferable and more effectual than sea-water.

v. 117. *As when o'er Erymanth Diana roves.*] This is a very beautiful comparison, (and when-ever I say any thing in commemoration

62 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

A sylvan train the huntress Queen surrounds,

120 Her rattling quiver from her shoulder sounds:

Fierce

dation of *Homer*, I would always be understood to mean the original.) *Virgil* was sensible of it, and inserted it in his Poem,

*Qualis in Eurota ripis aut per juga Cynthi
Exercet Diana choros; quam mille secuta
Hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades: illa pharetram
Fert humero; gradiensque dea supereminet omnes:
Latona tacitum pertentant gaudia pectus.*

It has given occasion for various Criticisms, with relation to the beauty of the two Authors. I will lay before the Reader what is said in behalf of *Homer* in *Anlus Gellius*, and the answer by *Scaliger*.

Gellius writes, that it was the opinion of *Valerius Probus*, that no passage has been more unhappily copy'd by *Virgil*, than this comparison. *Homer* very beautifully compares *Nausicaa*, a Virgin, sporting with her damsels in a solitary place, to *Diana*, a virgin Goddess, taking her diversion in a forest, in hunting with her rural Nymphs. Whereas *Dido*, a widow, is drawn by *Virgil* in the midst of a city, walking gravely with the Tyrian Princes, *Instans operi, regisque futuris*, a circumstance that bears not the least resemblance to the sports of the Goddess. *Homer* represents *Diana* with her quiver at her shoulder, but at the same time he describes her as an huntress: *Virgil* gives her a quiver, but mentions nothing of her as an huntress, and consequently lays a needless burden upon her shoulder. *Homer* excellently paints the fulness of joy which *Latona* felt at the sight of her daughter, γέγηθ' δὲ τὴ φρένα Διτῶ; *Virgil* falls infinitely short of it in the word *pertentant*, which signifies a light joy that sinks not deep into the heart. Lastly, *Virgil* has omitted the strongest point and very flower of the comparison,

Πῶα δ' ἀργυρώτη πέλεις, καλαὶ δὲ τὴ πῶας.

'Tis the last circumstance that compleats the comparison, as it distinguishes *Nausicaa* from her attendants, for which very purpose the allusion was introduced.

Scaliger (who never deserts *Virgil* in any difficulty) answers, that the persons, not the places, are intended to be represented by both Poets;

Fierce in the sport, along the mountain brow :

They bay the boar, or chase the bounding roe:

High o'er the lawn, with more majestic pace,

Above the nymphs she treads with stately grace;

125 Distinguish'd excellence the Goddess proves;

Exults *Latona* as the virgin moves.

With equal grace *Nausicaa* trod the plain,

And shone transcendent o'er the beauteous train.

Poets; otherwise *Homer* himself is blameable, for *Nausicaa* is not sporting on a mountain but a plain, and has neither bow nor quiver like *Diana*. Neither is there any weight in the objection concerning the gravity of the gait of *Dido*; for neither is *Nausicaa* describ'd in the act of hunting, but dancing: And as for the word *pertentant*, it is a metaphor taken from musicians and musical instruments: it denotes a strong degree of joy, *per* bears an intensive sense, and takes in the perfection of joy. As to the quiver, it was an ensign of the Goddess, as Ἀρπυρίαζος was of *Apollo*, and is apply'd to her upon all occasions indifferently, not only by *Virgil*, but more frequently by *Homer*. Lastly, πᾶσι δ' ἀπυρράν, &c. is superfluous, for the joy of *Latona* compleats the whole, and *Homer* has already said γέγηθε δὲ τὸ πένος Ἀντώ.

But still it must be allow'd, that there is a greater correspondence to the subject intended to be illustrated, in *Homer* than in *Virgil*. *Diana* sports; so does *Nausicaa*; *Diana* is a Virgin, so is *Nausicaa*; *Diana* is amongst her virgin Nymphs, *Nausicaa* amongst her virgin attendants: whereas in all these points there is the greatest dissimilitude between *Dido* and *Diana*: And no one I believe but *Scaliger* can think the verse above quoted superfluous, which indeed is the beauty and perfection of comparison. There may, perhaps, be a more rational objection made against this line in both Poets.

Latona taciturn pertentant gaudia pectus.

This verse has no relation to the principal subject; the expectation is fully satisfy'd without it, and it alludes to nothing that either precedes or follows it, and consequently may be judg'd superfluous.

Mean

64 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

Mean time (the care and fav'rite of the skies)

130 Wrapt in embow'ring shade, *Ulysses* lies,

His woes forgot! But *Pallas* now address

To break the bands of all-composing rest.

Forth from her snowy hand *Nausicaa* threw

The various ball; the ball erroneous flew,

And

v. 133. *Forth from her snowy hand Nausicaa threw
The various ball.*]

This Play with the Ball was called *παῖς*, and *ἰσχυρὸς*, by the Ancients; and from the signification of the word, which is *deception*, we may learn the nature of the Play: The ball was thrown to some one of the players unexpectedly, and he as unexpectedly threw it to some other of the company to catch, from which surprize upon one another, it took the name of *παῖς*. It was a sport much in use amongst the Ancients, both men and women; it caus'd a variety of motions in throwing and running, and was therefore a very healthful exercise. The *Lacedaemonians* were remarkable for the use of it; *Alexander* the Great frequently exercised at it; and *Sophocles* wrote a Play, call'd *Παῖς*, or *Lotrices*; in which he represented *Nausicaa* sporting with her damsels at this play: It is not now extant.

Dionysidorus gives us a various reading, instead of *σφαῖραν ἔπυε* ἔπυε, he writes it, *ἄλλαν ἔπυε*, which the *Latins* render *aliam*, and *Snidas* countenances the alteration, for he writes that a damsel named *Larissa*, as she sported at this play, (*ἄλλω*, not *σφαίρῃ*) was drowned in the river *Peneus*. *Enstathius*.

What I would further observe is, the art of the Poet in carrying on the story: He proceeds from incident to incident very naturally, and makes the sports of these Virgins contribute to the principal design of the Poem, and promote the re-establishment of *Ulysses*, by discovering him advantageously to the *Phaicians*. He so judiciously interweaves these sports into the texture of the story, that there would be a chasm if they were taken away; and the sports of the Virgins are as much of a piece with the whole, as any of the labours of *Ulysses*.

The Poet reaps a further advantage from this conduct: it beautifies and enlivens the Poem with a pleasant and entertaining scene, and relieves the Reader's mind by taking it off from a continual repre-

- 135 And swam the stream : Loud shrieks the virgin train,
And the loud shriek redoubles from the main.
Wak'd by the shrilling sound, *Ulysses* rose,
And to the deaf woods wailing, breath'd his woes.
Ah me! on what inhospitable coast,
140 On what new region is *Ulysses* tost?
Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms?

representation of horror and sufferings in the story of *Ulysses*: He himself seems here to take breath, and indulging his fancy, lets it run out into several beautiful comparisons; to prepare the Reader to hear with a better relish the long detail of the calamities of his Heroe, thro' the sequel of the *Odyssey*.

v. 139. *Ah me, on what inhospitable coast.*] This soliloquy is well adapted to the circumstances of *Ulysses*, and short, as is requisite in all soliloquies.

Virgil has imitated it, and *Scaliger* in general prefers the copy to the original.

*Ut primam lux alma data est, enire; locosque
Explorare novos, quas vento accesserit oras:
Qui teneant (nam inculta videt) hominesne, ferentes,
Quarere constituit*————

But it may perhaps be true, that *Virgil* here falls short of *Homer*: There is not that harmony of numbers, that variety of circumstances, and sentiments in the *Latin*, as appears in the *Greek Poet*; and above all, the whole passage has more force and energy by being put into the mouth of *Ulysses*, than when merely related by *Virgil*.

Dacier observes, that *Abraham* makes the very same reflections as *Ulysses*, upon his arrival at *Gerar*. *Cogitavi mecum dicens, forsitan non est timor domini in loco isto*, Gen. xx. 11. *I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place*; which very well answers to καὶ σφιν νόος ἐστὶ δαυδῆς.

What

What sounds are these that gather from the shores?

The voice of nymphs that haunt the sylvan bow'rs?

145 The fair-hair'd *Dryads* of the shady wood;

Or azure daughters of the silver flood?

Or human voice? but issuing from the shades

Why cease I strait to learn what sound invades?

Then, where the grove with leaves umbrageous bends,

150 With forceful strength a branch the Heroe rends;

Around his loins the verdant cincture spreads

A wreathy foliage, and concealing shades.

As

V. 151. *Around his loins the verdant cincture spreads*

A wreathy foliage and concealing shades.]

This passage has given great offence to the Critics. The interview between *Ulysses* and *Nausicaa*, says *Rapine*, outrages all the rules of decency: She forgets her modesty, and betrays her virtue, by giving too long an audience: she yields too much to his complaints, and indulges her curiosity too far at the sight of a person in such circumstances. But perhaps *Rapine* is too severe; *Homer* has guarded every circumstance with as much caution as if he had been aware of the objection: He covers his loins with a broad foliage, (for *Eustathius* observes, that *πρόρος* signifies *κλάδος πλατύς*, or a broad branch) he makes *Ulysses* speak at a proper distance, and introduces *Minerva* to encourage her virgin modesty. Is there here any outrage of decency? Besides, what takes off this objection of immodesty in *Nausicaa*, is, that the sight of a naked man was not unusual in those ages; it was customary for Virgins of the highest quality to attend Heroes to the bath, and even to assist in bathing them, without any breach of modesty; as is evident from the conduct of *Polycaste* in the conclusion of the third book of the *Odyssey*, who bathes and perfumes *Telemachus*. If this be true, the other objections of *Rapine* about her yielding too much to his complaints, &c. are of no weight; but so many testimonies of her virtuous and compassionate disposition, which induces her to pity and relieve calamity. Yet it may seem that the other damsels had a

diffe-

As when a Lion in the midnight hours
Beat by rude blasts, and wet with wint'ry show'rs,

Descends

different opinion of this interview, and that thro' modesty they ran away, while *Nausicaa* alone talks with *Ulysses*: But this only shews, not that she had less modesty, but more prudence, than her retinue. The damsels fled not out of modesty, but fear of an enemy: whereas *Nausicaa* wisely reflects that no such person could arrive there, the country being an Island; and from his appearance, she rightly concluded him to be a man in calamity. This *Wisdom* is the *Pallas* in the Allegory, which makes her to stay when the other damsels fly for want of equal reflection. *Adam* and *Eve* cover'd themselves after the same manner as *Ulysses*.

v. 153. *As when a Lion in the midnight hours.*] This is a very noble comparison, yet has not escap'd censure; it has been objected that it is improper for the occasion, as bearing images of too much terror, only to fright a few timorous Virgins, and that the Poet is unseasonably sublime. This is only true in Burlesque poetry, where the most noble images are frequently assembled to disgrace the subject, and to shew a ridiculous disproportion between the allusion and the principal subject; but the same reason will not hold in Epic Poetry, where the Poet raises a low circumstance into dignity by a sublime comparison. The simile is not introduced merely to shew the impression it made upon the Virgins, but paints *Ulysses* himself in very strong colours: *Ulysses* is fatigued with the tempests and waves; the Lion with winds and storms: it is hunger that drives the Lion upon his prey; an equal necessity compells *Ulysses* to go down to the Virgins: the Lion is described in all his terrors, *Ulysses* arms himself as going upon an unknown adventure; so that the comparison is very noble and very proper. This verse in particular has something horrible in the very run of it.

Σμικροδελός δ' αὐτῇσι φάιν' κεκακωμένος ἄλμῃ.

Dionysius Halicarn. in his observations upon the placing of words quotes it to this purpose; When *Homer*, says he, is to introduce a terrible or unusual Image, he rejects the more flowing and harmonious vowels, and makes choice of such mutes and consonants as load the syllables, and render the pronunciation difficult.

Pausanias writes in his *Attics*, that the famous Painter *Polygnotus* painted this subject in the gallery at *Athens*. Ἐγραφε δὲ καὶ πρὸς τῷ ποταμῷ ταῖς ὁμῇ πλυνύσας ἱερισμένον Ὀδύσειαν; he painted

68 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

- 155 Descends terrific from the mountain's brow,
 With living flames his rowling eye-balls glow;
 With conscious strength elate, he bends his way
 Majestically fierce, to seize his prey;
 (The steer or stag;) or with keen hunger bold .
- 160 Springs o'er the fence, and dissipates the fold.
 No less a terror, from the neighb'ring groves
 Rough from the tossing surge *Ulysses* moves;
 Urg'd on by want, and recent from the storms;
 The brackish ooze his manly grace deforms.
- 165 Wide o'er the shore with many a piercing cry
 To rocks, to caves, the frightened virgins fly;
 All but the Nymph: the nymph stood fix'd alone,
 By *Pallas* arm'd with boldness not her own.
 Mean-time in dubious thought the King awaits,
- 170 And self-considering, as he stands, debates;
 Distant his mournful story to declare,
 Or prostrate at her knee address the pray'r.
 But fearful to offend, by wisdom sway'd,
 At awful distance he accosts the maid,

Painted *Ulysses* approaching *Nausicaa* and her damsels, as they were washing at the river. This is the same *Polygnotus* who painted in the gallery called *æuxian*, the battle of *Marathon* gain'd by *Miltiades* over the *Medes* and *Persians*.

If

69 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

175 If from the skies a Goddess, or if earth
(Imperial Virgin) boast thy glorious birth,
To thee I bend! if in that bright disguise
Thou visit earth, a daughter of the skies,

Hail,

V. 175. *If from the skies a Goddess, or if earth
(Imperial Virgin) boast thy glorious birth,
To thee I bend!]*

There never was a more agreeable and insinuating piece of flattery, than this address of *Ulysses*; and yet nothing mean appears in it, as is usual in almost all flattery. The only part that seems liable to any imputation, is that exaggeration at the beginning, of calling her a Goddess; yet this is propos'd with modesty and doubt, and hypothetically. *Eusebius* assigns two reasons why he resembles her to *Diana*, rather than to any other Deity; either because he found her and her damsels in a solitary place, such as *Diana* is suppos'd to frequent with her rural Nymphs; or perhaps *Ulysses* might have seen some statue or picture of that Goddess, to which *Nausicaa* bore a likeness. *Virgil* (who has imitated this passage) is more bold, when without any doubt or hesitation, before he knew *Venus*, he pronounces the person with whom he talks, *O Dea, certe*.

Ovid has copy'd this passage in his *Metamorphosis*, book the 4th.

————— *puer ò dignissime cradi*
Esse Deus; sen tu Deus es; potes esse Cupido:
Sive es mortalis; qui te genere beati!
Et frater felix, & qua dedit ubera matris!
Sed longe carèbis longeqna potentior illa
Si qua tibi sponsa est, si quam dignabere tulla!

Scaliger prefers *Virgil*'s imitation to *Homer*;

O, quam te memorem virgo! namque hand tibi vultus
Mortalis, nec vox hominem sonat. O Dea, certè!
An Phœbè soror, an Nympharum sanguinis una?

See

70 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

Hail, *Dian*, hail! the huntress of the groves

180 So shines majestic, and so stately moves,

So breathes an air divine! But if thy race

Be mortal, and this earth thy native place,

See his reasons in the fifth book of his Poetics. But *Scaliger* brings a much heavier charge against *Homer*, as having stol'n the verses from *Musæus*, and disgraced them by his alterations. The verses are as follow.

Κύπρι φίλη μέλα κύπριν, Ἀθηναίη μετ' Ἀθηνῶν,
 Οὐ γὰρ ἐπιχθονίῳσιν ἴσθι καλῶς σε γυναιξίν.
 Ἄλλα σε θυγατέρῳσι Διὸς Κρονίωνος, εἴπω
 Ὀλβίος δὲ σ' ἐρύττωσι, καὶ ὀλβίη ἢ τίττε μήτηρ
 Γαστήρ, ἢ σ' ἐλόχῳσι, μακαρτότῃ.

Scaliger imagines this *Musæus* to be the same mention'd by *Virgil*, in the *Elysian* fields,

Musæum ante omnes, &c.

But I believe it is now agreed, that all the works of the ancient *Musæus* are perish'd, and that the person who wrote these verses liv'd many centuries after *Homer*, and consequently borrow'd them from him. *Scaliger* calls them fine and lively in *Musæus*, but abject, unnervate, and unharmonious in *Homer*. But his prejudice against *Homer* is too apt to give a wrong bias to his judgment. Is the similitude of sound in *ἴσθι ἴσθι* in the second verse of *Musæus*, harmonious? and is there not a tautology in the two last lines? *Happy is the mother that bore thee, and most happy the womb that brought thee forth*; as if the happy person in the former line, were not the same with the most happy in the latter! Whereas *Homer* still rises in his Images, and ends with a compliment very agreeable to a beautiful Woman.

But blest o'er all, the youth with heavenly charms,
 Who clasps the bright perfection in his arms!

But this is submitted to the Reader's better judgment.

Blest

Blest is the father from whose loins you sprung,
 Blest is the mother at whose breast you hung,
 Blest are the brethren who thy blood divide,
 To such a miracle of charms ally'd:
 Joyful they see applauding princes gaze,
 When stately in the dance you swim th' harmonious maze!
 But blest o'er all, the youth with heav'nly charms,
 Who clasps the bright perfection in his arms!
 Never, I never view'd 'till this blest hour
 Such finish'd grace! I gaze and I adore!

185

190

Thus

v. 187. *Joyful they see applauding Princes gaze.*] In the original, there is a false construction, for after σφίσι θυμὸν ἰατρίαι, Ulysses uses λυσσέσθων, whereas it ought to be λυσσέσι; but this disorder is not without its effect, it represents the modest confusion with which he addresses Nausicaa; he is struck with a religious awe at the sight of her, (for so σέβας properly signifies,) and consequently naturally falls into a confusion of expression: This is not a negligence, but a beauty. *Enstath.*

v. 193. *Thus seems the Palm.*] This allusion is introduced to image the stateliness, and exactness of shape in Nausicaa, to the mind of the Reader; and so Tully, as Spondanus observes, understands it. Cicero, 1. de legibus. *Aut quod Homericus Ulysses Deli se proceram & terram palmam vidisse dixit, hodie monstrant eandem.* Pliny also mentions this Palm, lib. 14. cap. 44. *Necnon palma Deli ab ejusdem Dei atate conspicitur:* The story of the Palm is this: "When Latona was in travail of Apollo in Delos, the earth that instant produced a large Palm, against which she rested in her labour." Homer mentions it in his Hymns.

Κεκλημένον —————

Ἀλχουράτω φοίνικος.

And also Callimachus.

Λίσσας δὲ ζώνην, ἀπὸ δ' ἐκλήβη ἑμπαλιν ὤμων
 Φοίνικος ποτὶ ἀρέμνον. And again.

—ἰπένου—

72 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

Thus seems the Palm with stately honours crown'd
By *Phœbus*' altars; thus o'erlooks the ground;

195 The pride of *Dela*. (By the *Delian* coast
I voyag'd, leader of a warrior host,
But ah how chang'd! from thence my sorrow flows;
O fatal voyage, source of all my woes!)

Raptur'd

——— ἐπὶ νηυσὶ δὲ Δελίῳ ἀδὺ τὶ φοιτῇ
Ἐξ ἀνίης.

This allusion is after the oriental manner. Thus in the *Psalms*, how frequently are persons compar'd to *Cedars*? and in the same Author, children are resembled to *Olive branches*.

This Palm was much celebrated by the Ancients; the superstition of the age had given it a religious veneration, and even in the times of *Tully* the natives esteem'd it immortal; (for so the above-mention'd words imply;) This gives weight and beauty to the address of *Ulysses*, and it could not but be very acceptable to a young Lady, to hear herself compar'd to the greatest wonder in the Creation.

Dionysius Halicarn. observes the particular beauty of these two verses.

Δήλα δὲ ποτε τοῖον Ἀπόλλωνος παρὰ βωμῶ,
Φοίνικος ἦν ἄνθος ἀνιχόμενον ἰνῶσαι.

When *Homer*, says he, would paint an elegance of beauty, or represent any agreeable object, he makes use of the smoothest vowels and most flowing semivowels, as in the lines last recited: He rejects harsh sounds, and a collision of rough words; but the lines flow along with a smooth harmony of letters and syllables, without any offence to the ear by asperity of sound.

v. 198. *O fatal voyage, source of all my woes.*] There is some obscurity in this passage: *Ulysses* speaks in general, and does not specify what voyage he means. It may therefore be ask'd how is it to be understood? *Enstathius* answers, that the voyage of the *Greeks* to the *Trojan* expedition is intended by the Poet; for *Ly-*
cophron

Book VI. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 73

- Raptur'd I stood, and as this hour amaz'd,
 200 With rev'rence at the lofty wonder gaz'd:
 Raptur'd I stand! for earth ne'er knew to bear
 A plant so stately, or a nymph so fair.
 Aw'd from access, I lift my suppliant hands;
 For Misery, oh Queen, before thee stands!
- 205 Twice ten tempestuous nights I roll'd, resign'd
 To roaring billows, and the warring wind;
 Heav'n bad the deep to spare! but heav'n my foe
 Spares only to inflict some mightier woe!
 Inur'd to cares, to death in all its forms,
- 210 Outcast I rove, familiar with the storms!
 Once more I view the face of humankind:
 Oh let soft pity touch thy gen'rous mind!
 Unconscious of what air I breathe, I stand
 Naked, defenceless on a foreign land.
- 215 Propitious to my wants, a Vest supply
 To guard the wretched from th' inclement sky:

cophon writes, that the *Greeks* sail'd by *Delos* in their passage to *Troy*.

Homer passes over the voyage in this transient manner without a further explanation: *Ulysses* had no leisure to enlarge upon that story, but reserves it more advantageously for a future discovery before *Alcinous* and the *Phæacian* rulers. By this conduct he avoids a repetition, which must have been tedious to the reader, who would have found little appetite afterwards, if he had already been satisfied by a full discovery made to *Nausicaa*. The obscurity therefore arises from choice, not want of judgment.

74 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

- So may the Gods who heav'n and earth controul,
Crown the chaste wishes of thy virtuous soul,
On thy soft hours their choicest blessings shed,
220 Blest with a husband be thy bridal bed,
Blest be thy husband with a blooming race,
And lasting union crown your blissful days.
The Gods, when they supremely bless, bestow
Firm union on their Favourites below;
225 Then Envy grieves, with inly-pining Hate;
The good exult, and heav'n is in our state.
To whom the Nymph: O stranger cease thy care,
Wife is thy soul, but man is born to bear:
Jove weighs affairs of earth in dubious scales,
230 And the good suffers, while the bad prevails:
Bear,

v. 229. *Jove weighs affairs of earth in dubious scales,
And the good suffers, while the bad prevails.*
The morality of this passage is excellent, and very well adapted to
the present occasion. *Ulysses* had said,

*Heav'n bade the deep to spare! but heav'n my foe
Spare only to inflict some mightier woe.*

Nausicaa makes use of this expression to pay her address to *Ulysses*,
and at the same time teaches, conformably to truth, that the afflicted
are not always the objects of divine hate: The Gods (adds
she) bestow good and evil indifferently, and therefore we must not
judge of men from their conditions, for good men are frequently
wretched, and bad men happy. Nay sometimes affliction distin-
guishes a man of goodness, when he bears it with a greatness of spi-
rit. *Sophocles* puts a very beautiful expression into the mouth of *OEdi-
pus*, καλλος κακῶν, the beauty and ornament of calamities. *Enstathius*.
Longinus

Book VI. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 75

Bear, with a soul resign'd, the will of *Jove*;
 Who breathes, must mourn: thy woes are from above.
 But since thou tread'st our hospitable shore,
 'Tis mine to bid the wretched grieve no more,

235 To cloath the naked, and thy way to guide——

Know, the *Phæcian* tribes this land divide;

From great *Alcinous*' royal loins I spring,

A happy nation, and an happy King.

Longinus is of opinion, that when great Poets and Writers sink in their vigour, and cannot reach the Pathetic, they descend to the Moral. Hence he judges the *Odyssey* to be the work of *Homer's* declining years, and gives that as a reason of its morality: He speaks not this out of derogation to *Homer*, for he compares him to the Sun, which tho' it has not the same warmth as when in the Meridian, is always of the same bigness: This is no dishonour to the *Odyssey*; the most useful, if not the most beautiful circumstance is allow'd it, I mean Instruction; In the *Odyssey* *Homer* appears to be the better Man, in the *Iliad* the better Poet.

v. 242. 'Tis death with hostile *step these shores to tread.*] This I take to be the meaning of the word *θνήσκος*, which *Eusebius* explains by *ζῶν καὶ ἰπποκρένος*, *vivens & valens*; or, *he shall not be long-liv'd*. But it may be ask'd how this character of valour in destroying their enemies, can agree with the *Phæcians*, an effeminate, unwarlike nation? *Eusebius* answers, that the protection of the Gods is the best defence, and upon this *Nausicaa* relies. But then it is necessary that man should co-operate with the Gods; for it is in vain to rely upon the Gods for safety, if we our selves make not use of means proper for it: whereas the *Phæcians* were a people wholly given up to luxury and pleasures. The true reason then of *Nausicaa's* praise of the *Phæcians* may perhaps be drawn from that honourable partiality, and innate love which every person feels for his country. She knew no people greater than the *Phæcians*, and having ever liv'd in full security from enemies, she concludes that it is not in the power of enemies to disturb that security.

76 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

- Then to her maids:—Why, why, ye coward train
 240 These fears, this flight? ye fear, and fly in vain.
 Dread ye a foe? dismiss that idle dread,
 'Tis death with hostile step these shores to tread:
 Safe in the love of heav'n, an ocean flows
 Around our realm, a barrier from the foes;
 245 'Tis ours this son of sorrow to relieve,
 Cheer the sad heart, nor let affliction grieve.
 By *Jove* the stranger and the poor are sent,
 And what to those we give, to *Jove* is lent.
 Then food supply, and bathe his fainting limbs
 250 Where waving shades obscure the mazy streams.
 Obedient to the call, the chief they guide
 To the calm current of the secret tyde;
 Close by the stream a royal dress they lay,
 A vest and robe, with rich embroid'ry gay:
 255 Then unguents in a vase of gold supply,
 That breath'd a fragrance thro' the balmy sky.

v. 247. *By Jove the stranger and the poor are sent,
 And what to those we give, to Jove is lent.]*

This is a very remarkable passage, full of such a pious generosity as the wisest teach, and the best practise. I am sensible it may be understood two ways; and in both, it bears an excellent instruction. The words are, *the poor and stranger are from Jove, and a small gift is acceptable to them, or acceptable to Jupiter, Διὶ φίλον*. I have chosen the latter, in conformity to the eastern way of thinking: *He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, as it is expressed in the Proverbs.*

To

Book VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 77

To them the King. No longer I detain
Your friendly care: retire, ye virgin train!
Retire, while from my weary'd limbs I lave:

260 The foul pollution of the briny wave:

Ye Gods! since this worn frame refection knew,
What scenes have I survey'd of dreadful view?
But, nymphs, recede! sage chastity denies
To raise the blush, or pain the modest eyes.

265 The nymphs withdrawn, at once into the tide
Active he bounds; the flashing waves divide:

O'er

v. 263. *But, nymphs, recede! &c.*] This place seems contradictory to the practice of Antiquity, and other passages in the *Odyssey*: Nothing is more frequent than for Heroes to make use of the ministry of damsels in bathing, as appears from *Polycaste* and *Telemachus*, &c. Whence is it then that *Ulysses* commands the attendants of *Nausicaa* to withdraw while he bathes? *Spondanus* is of opinion, that the Poet intended to condemn an indecent custom of those ages solemnly by the mouth of so wise a person as *Ulysses*: but there is no other instance in all his works to confirm that conjecture. I am at a loss to give a better reason, unless the difference of the places might make an alteration in the action. It is possible that in baths prepared for publick use, there might be some convenience to defend the person who bath'd in some degree from observation, which might be wanting in an open river, so that the action might be more indecent in the one instance than in the other, and consequently occasion these words of *Ulysses*: But this is a conjecture, and submitted as such to the Reader's better judgment.

v. 265.

— At once into the tide
Active he bounds.]

It may be ask'd why *Ulysses* prefers the river-waters in washing, to the waters of the sea, in the *Odyssey*; whereas in the tenth book of the *Iliad*, after the death of *Dolon*, *Diomed* and *Ulysses* prefer the sea-waters to those of the river? There is a different reason for this different regimen: In the *Iliad*, *Ulysses* was fatigued, and

E. 3.

sweated.

78 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

O'er all his limbs his hands the wave diffuse,
 And from his locks compress the weedy ooze;
 The balmy oil, a fragrant show'r, he sheds,
 270 Then drest in pomp magnificently treads.
 The warrior Goddess gives his frame to shine
 With majesty enlarg'd, and air divine;

Back

sweated with the labours of the night, and in such a case the seawaters being more rough are more purifying and corroborating: But here *Ulysses* comes from the seas, and (as *Plutarch* in his *Symposiasts* observes upon this passage,) the more subtle and light particles exhale by the heat of the sun, but the rough and saline stick to the body, 'till wash'd away by fresh waters.

v. 271. *The warrior Goddess gives his frame to shine.*] Poetry delights in the Marvellous, and ennobles the most ordinary subjects by dressing them with poetical ornaments, and giving them an adventitious dignity. The foundation of this fiction, of *Ulysses* receiving beauty from *Pallas*, is only this: The shipwreck and sufferings of *Ulysses* had changed his face and features, and his long fasting given him a pale and sorrowful aspect; but being bath'd, perfum'd, and dress'd in robes, he appears another man, full of life and beauty. This sudden change gave *Homer* the hint to improve it into a miracle; and he ascribes it to *Minerva*, to give a dignity to his Poetry. He further embellishes the description by a very happy comparison. *Virgil* has imitated it.

*Os humerosque Deo similis; namque ipsa decoram
 Casariam nato genetrix, lumenque juventa
 Purpureum, & latos oculis afflârat honores.
 Quale manus addant ebori decus, aut ubi flavo
 Argentum Parinsve lapis circumdatur auro.*

Scaliger, in the fifth book of his *Poetics*, prefers *Virgil* before *Homer*; and perhaps his opinion is just: *Manus* he says is more elegant than *vir*; and *addant ebori decus*, than *χαρύνει δὲ ἔργα τέλει*. *Os humerosque Deo similis*, carries a nobler idea than *Homer's* *μειζοτέρα καὶ πλεονεχέστερα*; and above all,

—Lumen—

Book VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 79

Back from his brows a length of hair unfurls,
His hyacinthine locks descend in wavy curls.

275 As by some artist to whom *Vulcan* gives
His skill divine, a breathing statue lives;
By *Pallas* taught, he frames the wond'rous mold,
And o'er the silver pours the fusile gold.
So *Pallas* his heroic frame improves

280 With heavenly bloom, and like a God he moves.
A fragrance breathes around: majestic grace
Attends his steps: th' astonish'd virgins gaze.
Soft he reclines along the murm'ring seas,
Inhaling freshness from the fanning breeze.

285 The wond'ring Nymph his glorious port survey'd,
And to her damsels, with amazement, said.

—————*Lumenque juvena
Purpureum, & latos oculos afflarat honores.*

is inexpressibly beautiful.

It is said that this image is made by the assistance of *Vulcan* and *Minerva*: Why by two Deities? *Enstathius* answers, the first rudiments and formation of it in the fire is proper to *Vulcan*, and *Minerva* is the president of arts; *Minerva* gives the Artificer Wisdom in designing, and *Vulcan* skill in labouring and finishing the work.

v. 283. *He reclines along the murm'ring seas.*] This little circumstance, *Enstathius* observes is not without its effect; the Poet withdraws *Ulysses*, to give *Nausicaa* an opportunity to speak freely in his praise without a breach of modesty: She speaks apart to her damsels, and by this conduct, *Ulysses* neither hears his own commendation, which is a pain to all worthy spirits, nor does *Nausicaa* betray an indecent sensibility, because she speaks only to her own sex and attendants.

80 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

Not without Cause divine the stranger treads
 This land of joy : his steps some Godhead leads:
 Would *Jove* destroy him, sure he had been driv'n
 290 Far from this realm, the fav'rite Isle of heav'n:
 Late a sad spectacle of woe, he trod
 The desert sands, and now he looks a God.
 Oh heav'n ! in my connubial hour decree
 This man my spouse, or such a spouse as he!
 295 But haste, the viands and the bowl provide—
 The maids the viand, and the bowl supply'd;
 Eager he fed, for keen his hunger rag'd,
 And with the gen'rous vintage thirst asswag'd.

v. 293. *Oh! heav'n! in my connubial hour decree*

This man my spouse, or such a spouse as he!]

This passage has been censur'd as an outrage against Modesty and Credibility; Is it probable that a young Princess should fall in love with a stranger at the first sight? and if she really falls in love, is it not an indecent passion? I will lay before the Reader the observations of *Plutarch* upon it. "If *Nausicaa*, upon casting her eyes upon this stranger, and feeling such a passion for him as *Catypso* felt, talks thus out of wantonness, her conduct is blamable; but if perceiving his wisdom by his prudent address, she wishes for such an husband, rather than a person of her own country, who had no better qualifications than singing, dancing and dressing, she is to be commended." This discovers no weakness, but prudence, and a true judgment. She deserves to be imitated by the fair sex, who ought to prefer a good understanding, before a fine coat, and a man of worth, before a good dancer.

Besides, it may be offer'd in vindication of *Nausicaa*, that she had in the morning been assured by a vision from Heaven, that her nuptials were at hand; this might induce her to believe that *Ulysses* was the person intended by the vision for her husband; and his good sense and prudent behaviour, as *Dacier* observes, might make her wish it, without any imputation of immodesty.

Now

Now on return her care *Nausicaa* bends,

- The robes resumes, the glittering car ascends,
Far blooming o'er the field: and as she pres'd
The splendid seat, the list'ning chief address'd.

Stranger arise! the sun rolls down the day,
Lo, to the Palace I direct thy way:

- 25 Where in high state the nobles of the land
Attend my royal fire, a radiant band.
But hear, tho' wisdom in thy soul presides,
Speaks from thy tongue, and ev'ry action guides;
Advance at distance, while I pass the plain

- 10 Where o'er the furrows waves the golden grain:
Alone I re-ascend——With airy mounds
A strength of wall the guarded city bounds:
The jutting land two ample bays divides;
Full thro' the narrow mouths descend the tides:
5 The spacious basons arching rocks enclose,
A sure defence from every storm that blows.

v. 313. *The jutting land two ample bays divides,
Full thro' the narrow mouths descend the tides.*]

This passage is not without its difficulty: But the Scholiast upon *Dionysius Periegetes* gives us a full explication of it. *Δυὸ λιμένας ἔχει ἡ φαίαις, τὸν μὲν Ἀλκινόος, τὸν δὲ Ὑλλῶ, διὸ, φησὶ Καλλιμαχος ἀμφίδυμος φαίαξ.* The Island of *Phaacia* has two ports, the one called the port of *Alcinous*, the other of *Hyllus*; thus *Callimachus* calls it the place of two ports. And *Apollonius* for the same reason calls it *ἀμφιδάφης*, or the place which is enter'd by two ports. *Dacier.*

E 5.

Close.

82 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

Close to the bay great *Neptune's* fane adjoins;
 And near, a Forum flank'd with marble shines,
 Where the bold youth, the num'rous fleets to store,
 320 Shape the broad sail, or smooth the taper oar;
 For not the bow they bend, nor boast the skill
 To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill,
 But the tall mast above the vessel rear,
 Or teach the fluttering sail to float in air;
 325 They rush into the deep with eager joy,
 Climb the steep surge, and thro' the tempest fly;
 A proud,

v. 325. *They rush into the deep with eager joy.*] It is very judicious in the Poet to let us thus fully into the character of the *Phæacians*, before he comes to show what relation they have to the story of the *Odyssey*: He describes *Alcinous* and the people of better rank, as persons of great hospitality and humanity, this gives an air of probability to the free and benevolent reception which *Ulysses* found: He describes the vulgar as excellent navigators; and he does this not only because they are Islanders; but, as *Eusebius* observes, to prepare the way for the return of *Ulysses*, who was to be restored by their conduct to his country, even against the inclination of *Neptune*, the God of the Ocean. But it may be ask'd, is not *Homer* inconsistent with himself, when he paints the *Phæacians* as men of the utmost humanity, and immediately after calls them a proud unpolish'd race; and given up to censoriousness? It is easy to reconcile the seeming contradiction, by applying the character of humanity to the higher rank of the nation, and the other to the vulgar and the mariners. I believe the same character holds good to this day amongst any people who are much addicted to sea-affairs; they contract a roughness, by being secluded from the more general converse of mankind, and consequently are strangers to that affability, which is the effect of a more enlarg'd conversation. But what is it that inclines the *Phæacians* to be censorious? It is to be remember'd, that they are every where describ'd as a people abandon'd to idleness; To idleness

Book VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 83

A proud, unpolish'd race——To me belongs
The care to shun the blast of sland'rous tongues ;
Left malice, prone the virtuous to defame,

330 Thus with vile censure taint my spotless name.

“ What stranger this, whom thus *Nausicaa* leads?

“ Heav'ns! with what graceful majesty he treads?

“ Perhaps a native of some distant shore,

“ The future Consort of her bridal hour ;

335 “ Or rather, some descendant of the skies ;

“ Won by her pray'r, th' aerial bridegroom flies.

“ Heav'n

nests therefore that part of their character is to be imputed. When the thoughts are not employed upon *things*, it is usual to turn them upon *persons*: A good man has not the inclination, an industrious man not the leisure, to be censorious, so that censure is the property of idleness. This I take to be the moral, intended to be drawn from the character of the *Phaeacians*.

v. 331. *What stranger this, whom thus Nausicaa leads?*] This is an instance of the great art of *Homer*, in saying every thing properly. *Nausicaa* had conceiv'd a great esteem for *Ulysses*, and she had an inclination to let him know it ; but modesty forbid her to reveal it openly: How then shall *Ulysses* know the value she has for his person, consistently with the modesty of *Nausicaa*? *Homer* with great address puts her compliments into the mouth of the *Phaeacians*, and by this method she speaks her own sentiments, as the sentiments of the *Phaeacians*: *Nausicaa*, as it were, is withdrawn, and a whole nation introduced for a more general praise of *Ulysses*.

v. 335. *Or rather, some descendant of the skies.*] *Eustathius* remarks, that the compliments of *Nausicaa* answer the compliments made to her by *Ulysses*: he resembled her to *Diana*, he'd him to the Gods. But it may be ask'd, are not both these extravagancies? and is it not beyond all credibility that *Nausicaa* should be thought a Goddess, or *Ulysses* a God? In these ages it would be judg'd extravagant, but it is to be remember'd that in the days of *Homer*

84 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

"Heav'n on that hour its choicest influence shed,

"That gave a sov'reign spouse to crown her bed!

"All, all the god-like worthies that adorn

340 "This realm, she flies: *Phœcia* is her scorn.

And just the blame: for female inapience

Not only flies the guilt, but shuns th' offence:

Th' unguarded virgin as unchaste I blame,

And the least freedom with the sex is shame,

345 'Till our consenting fires a spouse provide,

And public nuptials justify the bride.

But

every grove, river, fountain, and oak-tree were thought to have their peculiar Deities; this makes such relations as these more reconcilable, if not to truth, at least to the opinions of Antiquity, which is sufficient for Poetry.

v. 344. — *The least freedom with the sex is shame,*

'Till our consenting fires a spouse provide.]

This is an admirable picture of ancient female life among the Orientals; the Virgins were very retir'd, and never appear'd amongst men but upon extraordinary occasions, and then always in the presence of the father or mother: But when they were married, says *Emesthins*, they had more liberty. Thus *Helen* converses freely with *Telemachus* and *Pisistratus*, and *Penelope* sometimes with the suitors. *Nausicaa* delivers her judgment sententially, to give it more weight; what can be more modest than these expressions? And yet they have been greatly traduc'd by *Monsieur Perrault*, a French Critic; he translates the passage so as to imply that "*Nausicaa* disapproves of a Virgin's lying with a man without the permission of her father, before marriage;" ἀνδράσι μιζοχόουσι led him into this mistake, which is sometimes used in such a signification, but here it only means *Conversation*: if the word μιζοχόουσι signified more than keeping company, it would be more ridiculous, as *Boileau* observes upon *Longinus*, than *Perrault* makes it: for it is join'd to ἀνδράσι, and then it would infer that *Nausicaa* disapproves of a young woman's lying with several men before she was married,

Book VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 85

But would'st thou soon review thy native plain?

Attend, and speedy thou shalt pass the main:

Nigh where a grove, with verdant poplars crown'd

350 To *Pallas* sacred, shades the holy ground,

We bend our way: a bubbling fount distills

A lucid lake, and thence descends in rills:

Around the grove a mead with lively green

Falls by degrees, and forms a beauteous scene;

355 Here a rich juice the royal vineyard pours;

And there the garden yields a waste of flow'rs.

married, without the licence of her father. The passage, continues *Boileau*, is full of honour and decency: *Nausicaa* has a design to introduce *Ulysses* to her father, she tells him she goes before to prepare the way for his reception, but that she must not be seen to enter the city in his company, for fear of giving offence, which a modest woman ought not to give: A virtuous woman is obliged not only to avoid immodesty, but the appearance of it; and for her part she could not approve of a young woman keeping company with men without the permission of her father or mother, before she was married. Thus the indecency is not in *Homer*, but the Critic: it is indeed in *Homer* an excellent lecture of Modesty and Morality.

v. 347. *But wou'dst thou soon review thy native plain?*] *Enstathius* and *Dacier* are both of opinion, that *Nausicaa* had conceiv'd a passion for *Ulysses*: I think this passage is an evidence that she rather admir'd and esteem'd, than lov'd him; for it is contrary to the nature of that passion to give directions for the departure of the person belov'd, but rather to invent excuses to prolong his stay. 'Tis true *Nausicaa* had wish'd in the foregoing parts of this book, that she might have *Ulysses* for her husband, or such an husband as *Ulysses*: but this only shews that she admir'd his accomplishments, nor could she have added *such a spouse as he*, at all, if her affections had been engag'd and fix'd upon *Ulysses* only. This likewise takes off the objection of a too great fondness in *Nausicaa*; for it might have appeared too great a fondness to have fall'n in love at the first with an absolute stranger.

Hence

86 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

Hence lies the town as far, as to the ear
Floats a strong shout along the waves of air.
There wait embowr'd, while I ascend alone

- 360 To great *Alcinous* on his royal throne.
Arriv'd, advance impatient of delay,
And to the lofty palace bend thy way:
The lofty palace overlooks the town,
From ev'ry dome by pomp superior known;
365 A child may point the way. With earnest gait
Seek thou the Queen along the rooms of state;
Her royal hand a wond'rous work designs,
Around, a circle of bright damsels shines,
Part twist the threads, and part the wool dispose,
370 While with the purple orb the spindle glows.
High on a throne, amid the *Scherian* pow'rs,
My royal father shares the genial hours;
But to the Queen thy mournful tale disclose;
With the prevailing eloquence of woes:
375 So shalt thou view with joy thy natal shore,
Tho' mountains rise between, and oceans roar.

v. 373. *But to the Queen thy mournful tale disclose.*] This little circumstance, seemingly of small importance, is not without its beauty. It is natural for a daughter to apply to the mother, rather than the father: Women are likewise generally of a compassionate nature, and therefore the Poet first interests the Queen in the cause of *Ulysses*. At the same time he gives a pattern of conjugal affection, in the union between *Arete* and *Alcinous*.

Book VI. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 87

She added not, but waving as she wheel'd
The silver scourge, it glitter'd o'er the field:
With skill the virgin guides th' embroider'd rein,
380 Slow rows the car before th' attending train.
Now whirling down the heav'ns, the golden day
Shot thro' the western clouds a dewy ray;
The grove they reach, where from the sacred shade
To *Pallas* thus the pensive Heroe pray'd.

385 Daughter of *Jove*! whose arms in thunder wield
Th' avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield;
Forsook by thee, in vain I fought thy aid
When booming billows clos'd above my head:
Attend, unconquer'd maid! accord my vows,
390 Bid the Great hear, and pitying heal my woes.
This heard *Minerva*, but forbore to fly
(By *Neptune* aw'd) apparent from the sky:

v. 391.

——— But forbore to fly

(By *Neptune* aw'd) apparent from the sky.]

We see the Ancients held a subordination amongst the Deities, and tho' different in inclinations, yet they act in harmony: One God resists not another Deity. This is more fully explain'd, as *Eustathius* observes, by *Euripides*, in his *Hippolytus*; where *Diana* says, it is not the custom of the Gods to resist one the other, when they take vengeance even upon the favourites of other Deities. The late tempest that *Neptune* had rais'd for the destruction of *Ulysses*, was an instance of *Neptune's* implacable anger: this makes *Minerva* take such measures as to avoid an open opposition, and yet consult the safety of *Ulysses*: She descends, but it is secretly.

Stern

88 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI

Stern God! who rag'd with vengeance unrestrain'd,
'Till great *Ulysses* hail'd his native land.

This book takes up part of the night, and the whole thirty second day; the vision of *Nausicaa* is related in the preceding night, and *Ulysses* enters the city a little after the Sun sets in the following evening. So that thirty two days are completed since the opening of the Poem.

This book in general is full of life and variety: It is true, the subject of it is simple and unadorn'd, but improved by the Poet, and render'd entertaining and noble. The Muse of *Homer* is like his *Minerva*, with respect to *Ulysses*, who from an object of commiseration improves his Majesty, and gives a grace to every feature.



T H E



Ulysses casts himself at the Feet of King Alcinous.

W. Verelsteden Sculp.



THE
SEVENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.





The ARGUMENT.

The Court of Alcinous.

The Princess Nausicaa returns to the city, and Ulysses soon after follows thither. He is met by Pallas in the form of a young Virgin, who guides him to the Palace, and directs him in what manner to address the Queen Arete. She then involves him in a mist, which causes him to pass invisible. The Palace and Gardens of Alcinous described. Ulysses falling at the feet of the Queen, the mist disperses, the Phæacians admire, and receive him with respect. The Queen enquiring by what means he had the garments he then wore, he relates to her and Alcinous his departure from Calypso, and his arrival on their dominions.

The same day continues, and the book ends with the night.

T H E

T H E
SEVENTH BOOK
O F T H E
O D Y S S E Y.

THE patient, heav'nly man thus suppliant pray'd;
While the slow mules draw on th' imperial maid;
Thro' the proud street she moves, the publick gaze:
The turning wheel before the Palace stays.

With

This book opens with the Introduction of *Ulysses* to *Alcinous*; every step the Poet takes carries on the main design of the Poem, with a progress so natural, that each incident seems really to have happen'd, and not to be invention. Thus *Nausicaa* accidentally meets *Ulysses*, and introduces him to *Alcinous* her father, who lands him in *Ithaca*: It is possible this might be true History; the Poet might build upon a real foundation, and only adorn the truth with the ornaments of Poetry. It is to be wish'd, that a faithful History of the *Trojan* war, and the voyages of *Ulysses* had been transmitted to posterity; it would have been the best comment upon the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. We are not to look upon the Poems of *Homer* as meer romances, but as true stories, heighten'd and beautify'd by Poetry: Thus the *Iliad* is built upon a real disention, that
happ'nd

92 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII.

5 With ready love her brothers gath'ring round,
 Receiv'd the vestures, and the mules unbound.
 She seeks the bridal bow'r: A matron there
 The rising fire supplies with busy care,
 Whose charms in youth her father's heart inflam'd,
 10 Now worn with age, *Eurymedusa* nam'd:

The

happen'd in a real war between *Greece* and *Troy*; and the *Odyssey* upon the real voyages of *Ulysses*, and the disorders that happen'd thro' his absence in his own country. Nay, it is not impossible but that many of those incidents that seem most extravagant in *Homer*, might have an appearing truth, and be justify'd by the opinions, and mistaken credulity of those ages. What is there in all *Homer* more seemingly extravagant, than the story of the race of the *Cyclops*, with one broad eye in their foreheads? and yet, as *Sir Walter Raleigh* very judiciously conjectures, this may be built upon a seeming truth: They were a people of *Sicily* remarkable for savageness and cruelty, and perhaps might in their wars make use of a headpiece or vizor, which had but one sight in it, and this might give occasion to sailors who coasted those shores to mistake the single sight of the vizor, for a broad eye in the forehead, especially when they before look'd upon them as monsters for their barbarity. I doubt not but we lose many beauties in *Homer* for want of a real history, and think him extravagant, when he only complies with the opinions of former ages. I thought it necessary to make this observation, as a general vindication of *Homer*; especially in this place, immediately before he enters upon the relation of those stories which have been thought most to outrage credibility: if then we look upon the *Odyssey* as all fiction, we consider it unworthily; it ought to be read as a story founded upon truth, but adorn'd with the embellishments of Poetry, to convey instruction with pleasure the more effectually.

v. 10. *Eurymedusa* nam'd.] *Enstathius* remarks, that the *Phaeacians* were people of great commerce, and that it was customary in those ages to exchange slaves in traffic; or perhaps *Eurymedusa* might be a captive, piracy then being honourable, and such seizures of cattle or slaves frequent. The passage concerning the brothers of *Nausicaa* has not escaped the censure of the Critics;

Book VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 93

The captive dame *Phœacian* rovers bore,
Snatch'd from *Epirus*, her sweet native shore,
(A grateful prize) and in her bloom bestow'd
On good *Alcinous*, honour'd as a God:

15 Nurse of *Nausicaa* from her infant years,
And tender second to a mother's cares.

Now from the sacred thicket where he lay,
To town *Ulysses* took the winding way.
Propitious *Pallas*, to secure her care,

20 Around him spread a veil of thicken'd air;

To

ticks; *Homer* in the original calls them *like Gods*, and yet in the same breath gives them the employment of slaves, they unyoke the Mules, and carry into the Palace the burthens they brought. A twofold answer may be given to this objection, and this conduct might proceed from the general custom of the age, which made such actions reputable; or from the particular love the brothers bore their sister, which might induce them to act thus, as an instance of it.

v. 20. *Around him spread a veil of thicken'd air.*] It may be ask'd what occasion there is to make *Ulysses* invisible? *Enstatius* answers, not only to preserve him from insults as he was a stranger, but that he might raise a greater surprize in *Alcinous* by his sudden appearance. But, adds he, the whole is an allegory; and *Ulysses* wisely chusing the evening to enter unobserv'd, gave occasion to the Poet to bring in the goddess of wisdom to make him invisible.

Virgil has borrow'd this passage from *Homer*, and *Venus* renders *Aeneas* invisible in the same manner as *Minerva* *Ulysses*. *Scaliger* compares the two Authors, and prefers *Virgil* infinitely before *Homer*, in the fifth book of his *Poetics*.

*At Venus obscuræ gradientes aere sepsit,
Et multo nebula circum Dea fudit amictu;*

Cernere

94 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII.

To shun th' encounter of the vulgar crowd,

Insulting still, inquisitive, and loud.

When near the fam'd *Phaenician* walls he drew,

The beauteous city opening to his view,

25 His step a Virgin met, and stood before:

A polish'd Urn the seeming Virgin bore,

And

*Cernere ne quis eos, neu quis contingere posset,
Molirive moram, aut veniendi poscere causas.*

Scaliger says the verses are more sonorous than *Homer's*, and that it was more necessary to make *Aeneas* invisible than *Ulysses*, he being amongst a perfidious nation. But was not the danger as great from the rudeness of the *Phaenicians*, as from the perfidiousness of the *Carthaginians*? Besides, *Virgil* does not mention the perfidiousness of the *Carthaginians*; so that it is the reason of *Scaliger*, not *Virgil*: and whether the verses be more sonorous, is submitted to the ear of the Reader. He is chiefly delighted with

Et multo nebula circum Dea fudit amictu.

Qui solus versus, says he, *deterreat Græcos ab ea sententiâ, quâ suam contendunt præferendum.* He allows *Κερτόμιοι τ' ἐπέεσσι*, &c. to be a tolerable smooth verse, *Commodus & facilis*, but yet far inferior to this of *Virgil*.

Molirive moram, & veniendi poscere causas.

It is but justice to lay the verses of *Homer* before the Reader.

Καὶ τότ' Ὀδυσσεὺς ὦρτο πόλιν δ' ἵμεν, ἀμφὶ δ' Ἀθήνῃ;

Πολλὴν ἥρα χεῦτε φίλα φρονέουσ' Ὀδυσῆϊ.

Μήτις φαιήκων μελαθύμων ἀνιστολήσας,

Κερτόμιοι τ' ἐπέεσσι, καὶ ἐξερείθ' ὅτις εἴη.

I determine not which author has the greater beauty, but undoubtedly *Homer* is more happy in the occasion of the fiction than *Virgil*; *Homer* drew his description from the wisdom of *Ulysses* in entering the town in the evening, he was really invisible to the *Phaenicians*, and *Homer* only heighten'd the truth by Poetry; but

Virgil

Book VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 95

And youthful smil'd; but in the low disguise
Lay hid the Goddess with the azure eyes.

Show me, fair daughter, (thus the chief demands)

30 The house of him who rules these happy lands.

Thro' many woes and wand'rings, lo! I come
To good *Alcinous'* hospitable dome.

Far from my native coast, I rove alone,
A wretched stranger, and of all unknown!

35 The Goddess answer'd. Father, I obey,
And point the wand'ring traveller his way:

Well known to me the palace you enquire,
For fast beside it dwells my honour'd fire,
But silent march, nor greet the common train

40 With question needful, or enquiry vain.

A race of rugged mariners are these;
Unpolish'd men, and boistrous as their seas:
The native Islanders alone their care,
And hateful he that breathes a foreign air.

45 These did the ruler of the deep ordain
To build proud navies, and command the main;

Virgil is more bold, and has no such circumstance to justify his relation; for *Aeneas* went into *Carthage* in the open day.

v. 26. — *The seeming Virgin, &c.*] It may be ask'd why *Minerva* does not appear as a Goddess, but in a borrow'd form? The Poet has already told us, that she dreaded the wrath of *Nep-
tune*; one Deity could not openly oppose another Deity, and there-
fore she acts thus invisibly.

On

28 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII.

On canvas wings to cut the wat'ry way;
No bird so light, no thought so swift as they.

Thus having spoke, th' unknown celestial leads:

50 The footsteps of the Deity he treads,
And secret moves along the crowded space,
Unseen of all the rude *Phœnician* race.

(So *Pallas* order'd, *Pallas* to their eyes
The mist objected, and condens'd the skies)

55 The chief with wonder sees th' extended streets,
The spreading harbours, and the riding fleets;
He next their princes lofty domes admires,
In sep'rate Islands crown'd with rising spires;
And deep intrenchments, and high walls of stone,

60 That gird the city like a marble zone.
At length the kingly palace gates he view'd:
There stopp'd the Goddess, and her speech renew'd.

My

v. 47. *On canvas wings to cut the wat'ry way.*] This circumstance is not inserted without a good effect: It could not but greatly encourage *Ulysses* to understand that he was arriv'd amongst a people that excell'd in navigation; this gave him a prospect of being speedily convey'd to his own country, by the assistance of a nation so expert in maritime affairs. *Eusebians*.

v. 55. ----- *Pallas to their eyes the mist condenses.*] *Scaliger* in his *Poeticks* calls this an impertinent repetition, and commends *Virgil* for not imitating it, for *Homer* dwells upon it no less than three times; and indeed one would almost imagine that *Virgil* was of the same opinion, for he has follow'd the turn of this whole passage, and omitted this repetition: yet he treads almost step by step

My task is done; the mansion you enquire
Appears before you: enter, and admire.

65 High-thron'd, and feasting, there thou shalt behold
The sceptred Rulers. Fear not, but be bold:
A decent boldness ever meets with friends,
Succeeds, and ev'n a stranger recommends.

First to the Queen prefer a suppliant's claim,
70 Alcinous' Queen, Arete is her name,
The same her parents, and her pow'r the same.

For

step in the path of Homer, and Aeneas and Ulysses are drawn in the same colours;

*Miratur molem Aeneas, magalia quondam:
Miratur portas. strepitumque & strata viarum.*

Θαύμαζεν δ' ὁδιστὺς λιμένας, καὶ ἦτας εἴσας,
Αὐτῶντ' Ἡρώων ἀγοράς, καὶ τύχια μακρά,
'Υψηλὰ, σκολόπεσσιν ἀρμόττα.

Homer poetically inserts the Topography of this city of the Phœacians: Tho' they were an unwarlike nation, yet they understand the art of fortification; their city is surrounded with a strong wall, and that wall guarded with palisades. But whence this caution, since Homer tells us in the preceding book, that they were in no danger of an enemy? It might arise from their very fears, which naturally suggest to cowards, that they cannot be too safe; this would make them practise the art of Fortification more assiduously than a more brave people, who usually put more confidence in valour than in walls, as was the practice of the Spartans.

v. 65. *My task is done, &c.*] As Deities ought not to be introduced without a necessity, so, when introduced, they ought to be employed in acts of importance, and worthy of their divinity:

VOL. II.

F

It

98 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII.

For know, from Ocean's God *Nausithous* sprung,

And *Peribaa*, beautiful and young:

(*Enrymedon*'s last hope, who rul'd of old

75 The race of Giants, impious, proud and bold;

Perish'd the nation in unrighteous war,

Perish'd the Prince, and left this only heir.)

Who now by *Neptune*'s am'rous pow'r compress,

Produc'd a Monarch that his people blest,

80 Father and Prince of the *Phaacian* name:

From him *Rhexenor* and *Alcinous* came.

The first by *Phæbus*' burning arrows fir'd,

New from his nuptials, hapless youth! expir'd.

No

It may be ask'd if *Homer* observes this rule in this Episode, where a Goddess seems to appear only to direct *Ulysses* to the Palace of *Alcinous*, which, as he himself tells us, a child could have done? But the chief design of *Minerva* was to advise *Ulysses* in his present exigencies: and (as *Eustathius* remarks) she opens her speech to him with great and noble sentiments. She informs him how to win the favour of *Alcinous*, upon which depends the whole happiness of her Heroe; and by which she brings about his re-establishment in his kingdom, the aim of the whole *Odyssey*. *Virgil* makes use of the same method in his *Æneis*, and *Venus* there executes the same office for her son, as *Minerva* for her favourite, in some degree as a Guide, but chiefly as a Counsellor.

v. 74. *Enrymedon*, &c.] This passage is worthy of observation, as it discovers to us the time when the race of the ancient Giants perish'd; this *Enrymedon* was grandfather to *Nausithous*, the father of *Alcinous*; so that the Giants were extirpated forty or fifty years before the war of *Troy*. This exactly agrees with ancient story, which informs us, that *Hercules* and *Theseus* purg'd the earth from those monsters. *Plutarch* in his life of *Theseus* tells us, that they were men of great strength, and public robbers,

one

No son surviv'd : *Arete* heir'd his state,

85 And her, *Alcinous* chose his royal mate.

With honours yet to womankind unknown,

This Queen he graces, and divides the throne ;

In equal tenderneſs her ſons conſpire,

And all the children emulate their ſire.

90 When thro' the ſtreet ſhe gracious deigns to move,

(The publick wonder, and the publick love)

The tongues of all with tranſport ſound her praiſe,

The eyes of all, as on a Goddeſs, gaze.

She

one of whom was called the *Bender of Pines*. Now *Theſeus* ſtole away *Helen* in her infancy, and conſequently theſe Giants were deſtroy'd ſome years before the *Trojan* expedition.

Dacier, Plutarch.

v. 84. *Ec. Arete.*] It is obſervable that this *Arete* was both wife and niece to *Alcinous*, an inſtance that the *Grecians* married with ſuch near relations : The ſame appears from *Demosthenes* and other *Greek* Orators. But what then is the notion of inceſt amongſt the Ancients? The collateral branch was not thought inceſtuous, for *Juno* was the wife and ſiſter of *Jupiter*. Brothers likewise married their brother's wives, as *Deiphobus* *Helen*, after the death of *Paris* : the ſame was practis'd amongſt the *Jews*, and conſequently being permitted by *Moses* was not inceſtuous. So that the only inceſt was in the aſcending, not collateral or deſcending branch ; as when parents and children married ; thus when *Myrrha* lay with her father, and *Lot* with his daughters, this was accounted inceſt. The reaſon is very evident, a child cannot pay the duty of a child to a parent, and at the ſame time of a wife or husband ; nor can a father act with the authority of a father towards a perſon who is at once his wife and daughter. The relations interfere, and introduce confuſion, where the law of nature and reaſon requires regularity.

v. 95. *To heal diſiſions, &c.*] This office of *Arete* has been look'd upon as ſomewhat extraordinary, that ſhe ſhould decide the quarrels

100 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII.

She feels the triumph of a gen'rous breast ;
 95 To heal divisions, to relieve th' oppress'd ;
 In virtue rich ; in blessing others, blest.
 Go then secure, thy humble suit prefer,
 And owe thy country and thy friends to her.

With that the Goddess deign'd no longer stay,
 100 But o'er the world of waters wing'd her way :
 Forfaking *Scheria's* ever-pleasing shore,
 The winds to *Marathon* the Virgin bore ;
 Thence, where proud *Athens* rears her tow'ry head,
 With opening streets and shining structures spread.
 105 She past, delighted with the well-known seats ;
 And to *Erechtheus'* sacred dome retreats.

Mean-while *Ulysses* at the Palace waits,
 There stops, and anxious with his soul debates,
 Fix'd in amaze before the royal gates.

The

quarrels of the subjects, a province more proper for *Alcinous* ; and therefore the Ancients endeavour'd to soften it by different readings ; and instead of *οἷον τ' εὐφροσύνην*, they inserted *ἡὸν τ' εὐφροσύνην*, or *she decides amongst women*. *Enstathius* in the text reads it in a third way, *ἡὸν τ' εὐφροσύνην*, or *by her wisdom*. *Spondanus* believes, that the Queen had a share in the government of the *Phaeacians* ; but *Enstathius* thinks the Poet intended to set the character of *Arete* in a fair point of light, she bearing the chief part in this book, and a great share in the sequel of the *Odyssey* : by this method he introduces her to the best advantage, and makes her a person of importance, and worthy to have a place in heroic Poetry ; and indeed he has given her a very amiable character.

v. 109. *Fixt in amaze before the royal gates.*] The Poet here opens a very agreeable scene, and describes the beauty of the Pa-

Book VII. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 101

110 The front appear'd with radiant splendors gay,
Bright as the lamp of night, or orb of day.
The walls were massy brass: the cornice high
Blue metals crown'd, in colours of the sky:

lace and Gardens of *Alcinous*. *Diodorus Siculus* adapts this passage to the Island *Taprobane*, *Justin Martin* to *Paradise*; Τὴ Παράδεισον δὲ εἰκόνα τὸν Ἀλκινόου κήπον σώζειν πιπτοῖκε. He transcribes this whole passage into his *Apology*, but with some variation from the common Editions, for instead of

ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἰὶ
Ζεφυρίη πνέουσα, ————— he reads

ἀλλ' αἰὶ αὐρὴ Ζεφυρίη, &c. perhaps more elegantly.

Enstathius observes that *Homer* suits his Poetry to the things he relates, for in the whole *Iliad* there is not a description of this nature, nor an opportunity to introduce it in a Poem that represents nothing but objects of terror and blood. The Poet himself seems to go a little out of the way to bring it into the *Odyssey*; for it has no necessary connection with the Poem, nor would it be less perfect if it had been omitted: but as *Mercury*, when he survey'd the bower of *Calypso*, ravish'd with the beauty of it, stood a while in a still admiration, so *Homer*, delighted with the scenes he draws, stands still a few moments, and suspends the story of the Poem, to enjoy the beauties of these gardens of *Alcinous*. But even here he shews his judgment, in not letting his fancy run out into a long description: He concludes the whole in the compass of twenty verses, and resumes the thread of his story. *Rapine*, I confess, censures this description of the gardens: he calls it *Puerile* and too light for Eloquence, that it is spun out to too great a length, and is somewhat affected, has no due coherence with, nor bears a just proportion to the whole, by reason of its being too glittering. This is spoken with too great severity: it is necessary to relieve the mind of the reader sometimes with gayer scenes, that it may proceed with a fresh appetite to the succeeding entertainment: In short, if it be a fault, it is a beautiful fault; and *Homer* may be said here, as he was upon another occasion by *St. Augustin*, to be *dolcissime vanus*. The admiration of the gold and silver is no blemish to *Ulysses*: for, as *Enstathius* remarks, it proceeds not out of avarice, but from the beauty of the work, and usefulness and magnificence of the buildings. The whole description, continues he, suits the character of the *Pheacians*, a proud, luxurious people, delighted with shew and ostentation.

Rich plates of gold the folding doors incase;

115 The pillars silver, on a brazen base;

Silver the lintels deep-projecting o'er,

And gold, the ringlets that command the door.

Two rows of stately dogs, on either hand,

In sculptur'd gold and labour'd silver stand.

120 These *Vulcan* form'd with art divine, to wait

Immortal guardians at *Alcinous'* gate;

Alive each animated frame appears,

And still to live, beyond the pow'r of years.

Fair thrones within from space to space were rais'd,

125 Where various carpets with embroidery blaz'd,

The

v. 118. *Two rows of stately dogs, &c.*] We have already seen that dogs were kept as a piece of state, from the instance of those that attended *Telemachus*: Here *Alcinous* has images of dogs in gold, for the ornament of his palace; *Homer* animates them in his Poetry; but to soften the description, he introduces *Vulcan*, and ascribes the Wonder to the power of a God. If we take the poetical dress away, the truth is, that these dogs were form'd with such excellent art, that they seem'd to be alive, and *Homer* by a liberty allowable to Poetry describes them as really having that life, which they only have in appearance. In the *Iliad* he speaks of living Tripods with greater boldness. *Enstathius* recites another opinion of some of the Ancients, who thought these *Kύνες* not to be animals, but a kind of large nails (*ἄλυσ*) or iron pins, made use of in buildings, and to this day the name is retain'd by builders, as Dogs of iron, &c. It is certain the words will bear this interpretation, but the former is more after the spirit of *Homer*, and more noble in Poetry. Besides, if the latter were intended, it would be absurd to ascribe a work of so little importance to a Deity.

v. 124. *Fair thrones within, &c.*] The Poet does not say of what materials these thrones were made, whether of gold or silver, to avoid

The work of matrons: These the Princes press,
 Day following day, a long-continu'd feast:
 Refulgent pedestals the walls surround,
 Which boys of gold with flaming torches crown'd;
 130 The polish'd Ore, reflecting ev'ry ray,
 Blaz'd on the banquets with a double day.
 Full fifty handmaids from the household train;
 Some turn the mill, or sift the golden grain,

avoid the imputation of being thought fabulous in his description; it being almost incredible, remarks *Enslathins*, that such quantities of gold and silver could be in the possession of such a King as *Alcinous*; tho' if we consider that his people were greatly given to navigation, the relation may come within the bounds of credibility.

v. 128. *Refulgent pedestals the walls surround,*

Which boys of gold with flaming torches crown'd.]

This is a remarkable piece of grandeur: Lamps, as appears from the 18th of the *Odyssey*, were not at this time known to the *Grecians*, but only Torches; these were held by Images in the shape of beautiful youths, and those Images were of gold. *Lauretins* has translated these verses.

*— Aurea sunt juvenum simulacra per adeis,
 Lampadas igniferas manibus retinentia dextris,
 Lumina nocturnis epulis ut suppeditentur.*

It is admirable to observe with what propriety *Homer* adapts his Poetry to the characters of his persons: *Nestor* is a wise man; when he is first seen in the *Odyssey*, it is at a sacrifice, and there is not the least appearance of pomp or luxury in his palace or entertainments. The *Phaeacians* are of an opposite character, and the Poet describes them consistently with it; they are all along a proud, idle, effeminate people; tho' such a pompous description would have ill suited the wise *Nestor*, it excellently agrees with the vain *Alcinous*.

Some ply the loom; their busy fingers move

135 Like poplar-leaves when Zephyr fans the grove.

Not more renown'd the men of *Seheria's* Isle,

For sailing arts and all the naval toil,

Than works of female skill their women's pride,

The flying shuttle thro' the threads to guide:

140 *Pallas* to these her double gifts imparts,

Inventive genius, and industrious arts.

Close

v. 135. *Like Poplar-leaves when Zephyr fans the grove.*] There is some obscurity in this short allusion, and some refer it to the work, others to the damsels employ'd in work: *Eustathius* is of the opinion that it alludes to the damsels, and expresses the quick and continued motion of their hands: I have follow'd this interpretation, and think that *Homer* intended to illustrate that quick and intermingled motion, by comparing them to the branches of a Poplar agitated by winds, all at once in motion, some bending this, some that way. The other interpretations are more forc'd, and less intelligible.

v. 107. [of the original.]

Καυσίαν δ' ὀβριαν ἀπολαίβεται ὕγρον ἔλαιον.
This passage is not without difficulty: some of the ancients understood it to signify the thickness and closeness of the texture, which was so compactly wrought that Oil could not penetrate it; others thought it expressed the smoothness and softness of it, as if Oil seem'd to flow from it; or lastly, that it shone with such a glossy colour as look'd like Oil. *Dacier* renders the verse according to the opinion first recited.

*So close the work, that oil diffus'd in vain,
Glides off innocuous and without a stain.*

Any of these interpretations make the passage intelligible, (tho' I think the description does better without it.) It is left to the judgment of the Reader which to prefer; they are all to be found in *Eustathius*.

v. 138. — *Works of female skill their women's pride.*] We may gather from what *Homer* here relates concerning the skill of these

Cloſe to the gates a ſpacious Garden lies,
 From ſtorms defended, and inclement ſkies:
 Four acres was th' allotted ſpace of ground,
 145 Fenc'd with a green enclosure all around.

theſe *Phaæcian* damſels, that they were fam'd for theſe works of curioſity: The *Cercyrians* were much given to traffic, and perhaps they might bring ſlaves from the *Sidonians*, who inſtructed them in theſe manufactures. *Dacier*.

V. 142. *Cloſe to the gates a ſpacious Garden lies.*] This famous Garden of *Alcinous* contains no more than four acres of ground, which in thoſe times of ſimplicity was thought a large one even for a Prince. It is laid out, as *Euſtathius* obſerves, into three parts: a grove for fruits and ſhade, a vineyard, and an allotment for olives and herbs. It is water'd with two fountains, the one ſupplies the palace and town, the other the garden and the flowers. But it may be ask'd what reality there is in the relation, and whether any trees bear fruit all the year in this Iſland? *Euſtathius* obſerves, that experience teaches the contrary, and that it is only true of the greateſt part of the year; *Homer*, adds he, diſguiſes the true ſituation of the *Phæacians*, and here deſcribes it as one of the happy Iſlands; at once to enrich his Poetry, and to avoid a diſcovery of his Poetical exaggeration. The relation is true of other places, if *Pliny* and *Theophrastus* deſerve credit, as *Dacier* obſerves; thus the Citron bears during the whole year fruits and flowers. *Arboſ ipſa omnibus horis pomifera, aliis cadentibus, aliis matureſcentibus, aliis vero ſubnaſcentibus.* The ſame is related of other trees by *Pliny*: *Nounsque fructus in his cum Arnotino pendet*; he affirms the like of the Pine, *habet fructum matureſcentem, habet proximo anno ad maturitatem venturum, ac deinde tertio, &c.* So that what *Homer* relates is in it ſelf true, tho' not entirely of *Phæcia*. Or perhaps it might be only intended for a more beautiful and poetical manner of deſcribing the conſtant ſucceſſion of one after another in a fertile climate.

————— *Figs on figs ariſe.*

Ariſtotle apply'd this Hemiftic ſcoffingly to the ſycophants of *Athens*; he was about to leave that city upon its rejoicing at the death,

F 5.

Tall thriving trees confess'd the fruitful mold ;
 The red'ning apple ripens here to gold.
 Here the blue fig with luscious juice o'erflows,
 With deeper red the full pomegranate glows,

death of Socrates; and, quoting this verse, he said he would not live in a place where

————— Ἰνάρηαι σύκοι δ' ἐπὶ σύκα.

alluding to the derivation of the word Sycophant. *Emstathius.*

Some dry the black'ning clusters in the sun.

To understand this passage aright, it is necessary to know the manner of ordering the vintage amongst the *Greeks*: First, they carried all the grapes they gather'd into an house for a season; afterwards they exposed them ten days to the sun, and let them lye abroad as many nights in the freshness of the air; then they kept them five days in cool shades, and on the sixth they trod them, and put the wine into vessels: This we learn from *Hesiod*: ἔρπον, verse 227.

————— Πάλλας ἀπόδρασι ὀκνάδ' βέτρυς
 Δαΐξας δ' ἡλίῳ δέκα τ' ἡμέατα καὶ δέκα νύκτας
 Πίπρη δὲ συκίαντας, ἔλῳ δ' εἰς ἄλγυ ἀρίστας
 Δάωρα Διωνύσῃ πολυμήνης ———

Homer distinguishes the whole into three orders: First, the grapes that have already been expos'd to the sun are trod; the second order is of the grapes that are exposed, while the others are treading; and the third, of those that are ripe to be gather'd, while the others are thus ordering. *Homer* himself thus explains it, by saying, that while some vines were loaded with black and mature grapes, others were green, or but just turning to blackness. *Homer* undoubtedly founds this poetical relation upon observing some vines that bore fruit thrice annually. *Pliny* affirms this to be true, lib. 16. cap. 27. *Vites quidem & trifera sunt, quas ob id insanas vocant, quoniam in iis alia maturescunt, alia surgunt, alia fiorescent.* *Dacier.*

The

- 150 The branch here bends beneath the weighty pear,
 And verdant olives flourish round the year.
 The balmy spirit of the western gale
 Eternal breathes on fruits untaught to fail:
 Each dropping pear a following pear supplies,
- 155 On apples apples, figs on figs arise:
 The same mild season gives the blooms to blow,
 The buds to harden, and the fruits to grow.
 Here order'd vines in equal ranks appear,
 With all th' united labours of the year;
- 160 Some to unload with fertile branches run,
 Some dry the black'ning clusters in the sun,
 Others to tread the liquid harvest join,
 The groaning presses foam with floods of wine.
 Here are the vines in early flow'r descry'd,
- 165 Here grapes discolour'd on the sunny side,
 And there in autumn's richest purple dy'd.
 Beds of all various herbs, for ever green,
 In beauteous order terminate the scene.
 Two plenteous fountains the whole prospect
 crown'd;
- 170 This thro' the gardens leads its streams around,
 Visits each plant, and waters all the ground:

While that in pipes beneath the palace flows,
 And thence its current on the town bestows;
 To various use their various streams they bring,

175 The People one, and one supplies the King.

Such were the glories which the Gods ordain'd
 To grace *Alcinous*, and his happy land.
 Ev'n from the Chief, who men and nations knew,
 Th' unwonted scene surprize and rapture drew;

180 In pleasing thought he ran the prospect o'er,
 Then hasty enter'd at the lofty door.

Night now approaching, in the palace stand
 With goblets crown'd, the Rulers of the land;

Mercury. Prepar'd for rest, and offering to the * God

185 Who bears the virtue of the sleepy rod.

Unseen he glided thro' the joyous crowd,
 With darkness circled, and an ambient cloud.

Direct to great *Alcinous'* throne he came,
 And prostrate fell before th' Imperial dame.

v. 184. *Prepar'd for rest, and offering to the God
 That bears the virtue of the sleepy rod.*]

I have already explain'd from *Athenaus* this custom of offering to *Mercury* at the conclusion of entertainments: he was thought by the Ancients to preside over sleep: *dat somnos adimitque*, according to *Horace*, as *Dacier* observes: In following ages this practice was alter'd, and they offer'd not to *Mercury*, but to *Jove* the Perfecter, or to *Zeus* *τῆρας*.

Then

190 Then from around him drop'd the veil of night;
Sudden he shines, and manifest to sight.

The Nobles gaze, with awful fear oppress;
Silent they gaze, and eye the god-like guest.

Daughter of great *Rhexenor*! (thus began

195 Low at her knees, the much-enduring man)

To thee, thy consort, and this royal train,
To all that share the blessings of your reign,

A sup.

v. 190. *Then from around him drop'd the veil of night.*] If this whole story of the veil of air had been told simply and nakedly, it would imply no more than that *Ulysses* arriv'd without being discover'd; and the breaking of the veil denotes his first coming into sight, in the presence of the Queen. But *Homer* steps out of the vulgar road of an Historian, and cloaths it with a sublimity worthy of heroic Poetry. In the same manner *Virgil* discovers his *Aeneas* to *Dido*;

————— *Cum circumfusa repente*
Scindit senubes, & in aera purgat opertum.

Scaliger prefers these verses to those of *Homer*, and perhaps with good reason; he calls the last part of the second verse a divine addition; and indeed it is far more beautiful than the *θεοφανες* of *Homer*.

v. 196. *To thee, thy consort, and this royal train.*] *Minerva* commanded *Ulysses* to supplicate the Queen: Why then does he exceed the directions of the Goddess, and not only address himself to *Alcinous*, but to the rest of the assembly? *Spondanus* answers, that *Ulysses* adapts himself to the present circumstances, and seeing the King and other Peers in the same assembly, he thought it improper not to take notice of them: he therefore addresses himself to all, that he may make all his friends. But then does not *Minerva* give improper directions? and is not *Ulysses* more wise than the Goddess of Wisdom? The true reason therefore may perhaps be, that *Ulysses* really complies with the injunctions

110 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII.

A suppliant bends: oh pity human woe!

'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe.

200 A wretched exile to his country fend,

Long worn with griefs, and long without a friend.

So may the Gods your better days increase,

And all your joys descend on all your race,

So reign for ever on your country's breast,

205 Your people blessing, by your people blest!

Then to the genial hearth he bow'd his face,

And humbled in the ashes took his place.

Silence

ctions of the Goddess: she commands him to address himself to the Queen; and he does so: this I take to mean chiefly or primarily, but not exclusively of the King: If the passage be thus understood, it solves the objection.

v. 200. *A wretched exile to his country fend.*] Ulysses here speaks very concisely; and he may seem to break abruptly into the subject of his petition, without letting the audience either into the knowledge of his condition or person. Was this a proper method to prevail over an assembly of strangers? But his gesture spoke for him, he threw himself into the posture of a suppliant, and the persons of all suppliants were esteem'd to be sacred: He declar'd himself to be a man in calamity, and reserves his story to be told more at large, when the surprize of the *Phæacians* at the sudden appearance of a stranger was over: this conciseness therefore is not blameable, but rather an instance of *Homer's* judgment, who knows when to be short, and when to be copious.

v. 207. *And humbled in the ashes took his place.*] This was the custom of Suppliants: they betook themselves to the hearth as sacred, and a place of refuge. It was particularly in the protection of *Vesta*: Thus *Tully*, lib. 2. *de Natura Deorum*; *Nomen Veste sumptum est a Græcis, ea est enim qua illis iortia dicitur, jusque ejus ad aras, & focos pertinet.* *Apollonius* likewise, as *Sponda-*
nus observes, takes notice of this custom of Suppliants.

Trd

Book VII. *HOMER's ODYSSEY.* 111

Silence ensu'd. The eldest first began,

Echeneus sage, a venerable man!

- 210 Whose well-taught mind the present age surpass,
And join'd to that th' experience of the last.
Fit words attended on his weighty sense,
And mild persuasion flow'd in eloquence.

Oh fight (he cry'd) dishonest and unjust!

- 215 A guest, a stranger, seated in the dust!
To raise the lowly suppliant from the ground
Befits a Monarch. Lo! the Peers around
But wait thy word, the gentle guest to grace
And seat him fair in some distinguish'd place.

Let

Τὼ δ' ἄνω, καὶ ἀναθῶς ἐφ' ἱστίῃ αἰζάνῃς
ἵζανον, ἥτι δίκην λυγροῖς ἐκένει τέτυκται.

That is, they betook themselves to the hearth, and there sat mute, which is the custom of all unhappy suppliants. If it was a custom, as *Apollonius* observes, to sit mute, this gives another reason why *Ulysses* used but few words in his supplication: he had greatly out-rag'd a practice that was establish'd as sacred amongst the *Greeks*, and had not acted in the character of a Suppliant, if he had launch'd out into a long oration.

This was the most sure and effectual way of supplication; thus when *Themistocles* fled to *Admetus* King of the *Molossians*, he placed himself before the hearth, and was receiv'd, tho' that King had formerly vow'd his destruction. *Plutarch* indeed calls it an unusual way of supplication, but that proceeded from his carrying a child in his arms to move the greater compassion, not from his throwing himself into the protection of the Household-Gods.

v. 209. *Echeneus* sage, &c.] The expression in the original, as *Dacier* observes, is remarkable: *Echeneus an old man, who knew many ancient, and great variety of things*; he was wise by long

112 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII.

- 220 Let first the herald due libation pay
 To *Jove*, who guides the wand'rer on his way;
 Then set the genial banquet in his view,
 And give the stranger-guest a stranger's due.
- His sage advice the list'ning King obeys,
 225 He stretch'd his hand the prudent chief to raise,
 And from his seat *Laodamas* remov'd,
 (The monarch's offspring, and his best lov'd)
 There next his side the god-like hero sate;
 With stars of silver shone the bed of state.
- 230 The golden ew'r a beauteous handmaid brings,
 Replenish'd from the cool translucent springs,
 Whose polish'd vase with copious streams supplies
 A silver laver, of capacious size.
 The table next in regal order spread,
- 235 The glitt'ring canisters are heap'd with bread:
 Viands of various kinds invite the taste,
 Of choicest sort and flavour, rich repast!

experience, and by being conversant in ancient story: The Author of the book of Wisdom speaks almost in the same expressions: *Scit præterita & de futuris æstimat.*

v. 226. *And from his seat Laodamas remov'd.*] *Plutarch* in his *Symposiasts* discusses a question, whether the Master of the feast should place his guests, or let them seat themselves promiscuously: He there commends this conduct of *Akinous*, as an instance of a courteous disposition and great humanity, who gave a place of dignity to a stranger and suppliant.

Thus

Book VII. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 113

Thus feasting high, *Alcinous* gave the sign
And bad the herald pour the rosy wine.

240 Let all around the due libation pay

To *Jove*, who guides the wand'rer on his way.

He said. *Pontonous* heard the King's command;
The circling goblet moves from hand to hand:
Each drinks the juice that glads the heart of man;

245 *Alcinous* then, with aspect mild, began.

Princes and Peers, attend! while we impart
To you, the thoughts of no inhuman heart.

Now pleas'd and satiate from the social rite

Repair we to the blessings of the night:

250 But with the rising day, assembled here,

Let all the Elders of the land appear,

Pious observe our hospitable laws,

And heav'n propitiate in the stranger's cause:

Then join'd in council, proper means explore

255 Safe to transport him to the wish'd-for shore:

(How distant that, imports not us to know,

Nor weigh the labour, but relieve the woe)

v. 240. ———— *The due libation pay to Jove.*] We have already seen that the whole assembly was about to pour libations to *Mercury*, whence is it then that they now offer to *Jupiter*? *Enstatius* observes, it was because of the arrival of this stranger, and *Jupiter* presides over all strangers, and is frequently stil'd *Zeus Xenios* and *Zeus étrechéos*.

Mean-

- Mean-time, nor harm nor anguish let him bear;
 This interval, Heav'n trusts him to our care,
 260 But to his native land our charge resign'd,
 Heav'n is his life to come, and all the woes behind.
 Then must he suffer what the Fates ordain;
 For Fate has wove the thread of life with pain,
 And twins ev'n from the birth, are misery and man! }
 265 But if descended from th' *Olympian* bow'r,
 Gracious approach us some immortal pow'r;
 If in that form thou com'st a guest divine:
 Some high event the conscious Gods design.
 As yet, unbid they never grac'd our feast,
 270 The solemn sacrifice call'd down the guest;
 Then manifest of heav'n the vision stood,
 And to our eyes familiar was the God.
 Oft with some favour'd traveller they stray,
 And shine before him all the desert way:
 275 With social intercourse, and face to face,
 The friends and guardians of our pious race.
 So near approach we their celestial kind,
 By justice, truth, and probity of mind;

As

v. 287. *So near approach we their celestial kind, &c.*] There is some intricacy in this passage, and much labor has been used to explain it. Some would have it to imply, that "we are as nearly ally'd to the Gods, as the *Cyclops* and *Giants*, who are descended

As our dire neighbours of *Cyclopean* birth

280 Match in fierce wrong, the Giant-sons of earth.

Let no such thought (with modest grace rejoin'd
The prudent *Greek*) possess the royal mind.

Alas! a mortal, like thy self, am I ;

No glorious native of yon azure sky :

285 In form, ah how unlike their heav'nly kind?

How more inferior in the gifts of mind?

“ scended from them ; and if the Gods frequently appear to these
“ Giants who defy them ; how much more may it be expected by
“ the *Phaicians* to enjoy that favour, who reverence and adore
them?” *Eustathius* explains it after another method ; *Alcinous* had
conceiv'd a fix'd hatred against the race of the *Cyclops*, who had
expell'd the *Phaicians* from their country, and forc'd them to seek
a new habitation ; he here expresses that hatred, and says, that the
Phaicians resemble the Gods as much in goodness, as the *Cyclops*
and Giants one the other in impiety : He illustrates it, by shewing
that the expression has the same import as if we should say that
Socrates comes as near to *Plato* in virtue, as *Anytus* and *Meletus*
to one another in wickedness ; and indeed the construction will
be easy, by understanding 'Αλλήλους in the second verse.

———— Σφισιν ἐγυῖθεν εἰμὶν,
“ Ὡς περ κύκλωπις καὶ ἄγρια φύλα γιγάντων,
Subandi, ἐγυῖθεν ἀλλήλους εἰσιν.

I have already spoken of the presence of the Gods at the sacrifices, in a former note upon the *Odyssey* : This frequent intercourse of the Gods was agreeable to the Theology of the Ancients ; but why then is *Alcinous* surpriz'd at the appearance of *Ulysses*, whom he looks upon as a God, if such favours were frequent? *Spondanus* replies, that it is the unusualness of the time, not the appearance, that surprizes *Alcinous* ; the Gods appear'd either at their sacrifices, or in their journeys, and therefore he looks upon this visit as a thing extraordinary.

Alas,

Alas, a mortal! most oppress'd of those
Whom Fate has loaded with a weight of woes;
By a sad train of miseries alone

290 Distinguish'd long, and second now to none!
By heav'n's high will compell'd from shore to shore;
With heav'n's high will prepar'd to suffer more.
What histories of toil could I declare?
But still long-weary'd nature wants repair;

295 Spent with fatigue, and shrunk with pining fast,
My craving bowels still require repast:
Howe'er the noble, suffering mind, may grieve
Its load of anguish, and disdain to live;
Necessity demands our daily bread;

300 Hunger is insolent, and will be fed.
But finish, oh ye Peers! what you propose.
And let the morrow's dawn conclude my woes.
Pleas'd will I suffer all the Gods ordain,
To see my foil, my son, my friends, again.

305 That view vouchsaf'd, let instant death surprise
With ever-during shade these happy eyes!

Th' af-

v. 305. *That view vouchsaf'd, let instant death, &c.*] It is very necessary to recall frequently to the reader's mind the desire *Ulysses* has to reach his own country; and to shew that he is absent not by choice, but necessity, all the disorders in his kingdoms happen by reason of his absence: it is therefore necessary to set the

HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII. 117.

Th' assembled Peers with gen'ral praise approv'd
His pleaded reason, and the suit he mov'd.

Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,

310 And to the gifts of balmy sleep repairs.

Ulysses in the regal walls alone

Remain'd: Beside him, on a splendid throne,

Divine *Arete* and *Alcinous* shone.

The Queen, on nearer view, the guest survey'd

315 Rob'd in the garments her own hands had made;

Not without wonder seen. Then thus began,

Her words addressing to the god-like man.

Cam'st thou not hither, wond'rous stranger! say,
From lands remote, and o'er a length of sea?

320 Tell then whence art thou? whence that Princely air?

And robes like these, so recent and so fair?

the desire of his return in the strongest point of light, that he may not seem necessary to those disorders, by being absent when it was in his power to return. It is observable that *Ulysses* does not here make any mention of *Penelope*, whom he scarce ever omits in other places, as one of the chief inducements to wish for his country; the reason of his silence, says *Eustathius*, is, because he is unwilling to abate the favour of *Alcinous*, by a discovery that would shew it was impossible for him to marry his daughter; such a discovery might make the King proceed more coolly towards his transportation; whereas it would afterwards be less dangerous, when he has had an opportunity fully to engage him in his favour.

Hard

118 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII.

Hard is the task, oh Princess! you impose:
 (Thus sighing spoke the man of many woes)
 The long, the mournful series to relate
 325 Of all my sorrows, sent by heav'n and fate!
 Yet what you ask, attend. An Island lies
 Beyond these tracts, and under other skies,

Ogygia

v. 322. *Hard is the task, oh Princess!]* Aeneas in Virgil speaks to Venus after the same manner, as Ulysses to Arete.

*O Dea, si primâ repetens ab origine pergam,
 Et vacet annales nostrorum audire laborum,
 Ante diem clauso componet vesper Olympo.*

Scaliger observes that Virgil so far exceeds the verses of Homer, that they will not even bear a comparison; he is superior almost in every word: for instance; he renders *δυνακίως*, by *primâ ab origine*, and adds the word *vacet* beautifully; and still more beautifully he translates *πολλὰ κῆδ' αὖ*, *annales nostrorum audire laborum*; and lastly he paraphrases the word *ἀργαλίον* by a most harmonious line,

Ante diem clauso componet vesper Olympo.

which excellently describes the multitude of the sufferings of Aeneas, which could not be comprehended in the relation of a whole day.

I will not deny but that Virgil excels Homer in this and many other passages which he borrows from him: but then is it a just conclusion to infer, after the manner of Scaliger, that Virgil is a better Poet than Homer? To conclude from particulars to generals is a false way of arguing. It is as if in a comparison of two persons, a man should from single features give a superiority of beauty, which is only to be gather'd from the symmetry of the whole body.

v. 326. *Yet what you ask, attend. ———]* Homer here gives a summary of the subject of the two preceding books: this recapitulation cannot indeed be avoided, because it is necessary to let Alcinoüs into his story, and this cannot be done without a repetition;

Book VII. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 116

Ogyia nam'd, in *Ocean's* wat'ry arms:

Where dwells *Calypso*, dreadful in her charms!

330 Remote from Gods or men she holds her reign,

Amid the terrors of the rowling main.

Me, only me, the hand of fortune bore

Unblest! to tread that interdicted shore:

When

tion; but generally all repetitions are tedious: The Reader is offended when that is related which he knows already, he receives no new instruction to entertain his judgment, nor any new descriptions to excite his curiosity, and by these means the very soul of Poetry is extinguish'd, and it becomes uninspired and lifeless. When therefore repetitions are absolutely necessary, they ought always to be short; and I may appeal to the Reader if he is not tir'd with many in *Homer*, especially when made in the very same words? Here indeed *Ulysses* tells his story but in part; the Queen ask'd him who he was, but he passes over this without any reply, and reserves the greatest part of his story to a time of more *leisure*, that he may discover himself to a better advantage before the whole Peerage of the *Phaeacians*. I do not always condemn even the verbal repetitions of *Homer*, sometimes 'as in embassies they may be necessary, because every word is stamp'd with authority, and perhaps they might be customary in *Homer's* times; if they were not, he had too fruitful an invention not to have varied his thoughts and expressions. *Bossu* observes, that with respect to repetitions *Virgil* is more exact than *Homer*; for instance, in the first book of the *Aeneis*, when *Aeneas* is repeating his sufferings to *Venus*, she interrupts him to give him comfort;

— *Nec plura querentem*
Passa Venus, medio sic interfata dolore est.

and in the third book, where good manners oblig'd this Heroe to relate his story at the request of *Andromache*, the Poet prevents it by introducing *Heleus*, who hinders the repetition.

v. 330. Remote from Gods or men she holds her reign.] *Homer* has the secret art of introducing the best instructions, in the midst of the plainest narrations. He has describ'd the unworthy passion of the Goddess *Calypso*, and the indecent advances she made
to

When *four* tremendous in the sable deeps

- 335 Launch'd his red lightning at our scatter'd ships:
 Then, all my fleet, and all my foll'wers lost,
 Sole on a plank, on boiling surges tost,
 Heav'n drove my wreck th' *Ogygian* Isle to find,
 Full nine days floating to the wave and wind.
- 340 Met by the Goddess there with open arms,
 She brib'd my stay with more than human charms;
 Nay promis'd, vainly promis'd, to bestow
 Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.
 But all her blandishments successless prove,
- 345 To banish from my breast my country's love.

to detain him from his country. It is possible this relation might make some impressions upon the mind of the Reader, inconsistent with exact Morality; What antidote then does *Homer* administer to expell this poison? He does not content himself with setting the chastity of *Penelope* in opposition to the loose desires of *Calypso*, and shewing the great advantage the Mortal has over the Goddess; but he here discovers the fountain from whence this weakness rises, by saying, that neither man nor Gods frequented this Island: on one hand the absence of the Gods, and on the other the infrequency of objects made her yield at the sight of the first that appears. Every object is dangerous in solitude, especially, as *Homer* expresses it, if we have no commerce with the Gods. *Dacier*.

v. 344. *But all her blandishments successless prove,—*] *Dacier*, from *Enstathius*, assigns the reason of the refusal of *Ulysses* to comply with the proffers of *Calypso*, to forsake his wife and country: It was, because he knew that women in love promise more than they either can, or intend to perform. An insinuation, that he would have comply'd if he had thought the Goddess would, or could, have perform'd her promises. But this is contrary to the character of *Ulysses*, whose greatest Glory it is, not to have listen'd even to a Goddess. In this view he ceases to be an Heroe, and his return is no longer a virtue, but he returns only because he found not a temptation sufficient to keep him from his country.

I stay

Book VII. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 121

I stay reluctant sev'n continu'd years,
And water her ambrosial couch with tears.
The eighth, she voluntary moves to part,
Or urg'd by *Jove*, or her own changeful heart.

350 A Raft was form'd to cross the surging sea;
Her self supply'd the stores and rich array;
And gave the gales to waft me on the way.
In sev'nteen days appear'd your pleasing coast,
And woody mountains half in vapours lost.

355 Joy touch'd my soul: My soul was joy'd in vain,
For angry *Neptune* rous'd the raging main:
The wild winds whistle, and the billows roar;
The splitting Raft the furious tempest tore;
And storms vindictive intercept the shore.

360 Soon as their rage subsides, the seas I brave
With naked force, and shoot along the wave,
To reach this Isle: but there my hopes were lost,
The surge impell'd me on a craggy coast.
I chose the safer sea, and chanc'd to find

365 A river's mouth impervious to the wind,
And clear of rocks. I fainted by the flood;
Then took the shelter of the neighb'ring wood.
'Twas night, and cover'd in the foliage deep,
Jove plung'd my senses in the death of sleep.

122 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII.

370 All night I slept, oblivious of my pain:

Aurora dawn'd, and *Phœbus* shin'd in vain,

Nor 'till oblique he slop'd his evening ray,

Had *Somnus* dry'd the balmy dew's away.

Then female voices from the shore I heard:

375 A maid amidst them, Goddess-like, appear'd:

To her I su'd; she pity'd my distress;

Like thee in beauty, nor in virtue less.

Who from such youth cou'd hope confid'rate care?

In youth and beauty wisdom is but rare!

She

v. 379. *In youth and beauty wisdom is but rare.*] In the preceding line *Ulysses* speaks of *Nausicaa*, yet immediately changes the words into the Masculine gender, for grammatically it ought to be *ναυσικήν ἀνδράσδεα*. *Homer* makes this alteration to pay the greater compliment to *Nausicaa*, and he intends to express by it, that neither woman nor man of her years could be expected to have such remarkable discretion. *Eustathius*.

Such sentences being very frequent in the *Odyssey*; it may not be improper to observe, of what beauty a sentence is in Epic Poetry. A Sentence may be defin'd, a moral instruction couch'd in few words. *Rapine* asserts, that sentences are more proper in Dramatic than Heroic Poetry: for Narration is the essential character of it, and it ought to be one continued thread of discourse, simple and natural, without an affectation of figures, or moral reflections: that energy which some pretend to collect and inclose within a small compass of words, is wont extremely to weaken the rest of the discourse, and give it a forc'd air: it seems to jut out of the structure of the Poem, and to be independent of it: he blames *Homer* for scattering his sentences too plentifully thro' his Poesy, and calls it an affectation and imperfection.

These objections would undoubtedly be of weight, if the sentences were so introduc'd as to break the thread of narration, as *Rapine* rightly observes. But is this the case with relation to *Homer*? He puts them into the mouth of the Actors themselves, and the

narration

380 She gave me life, reliev'd with just supplies
My wants, and lent these robes that strike your eyes.
This is the truth: And oh ye pow'rs on high!
Forbid that want shou'd sink me to a lye.

To this the King. Our daughter but exprest

385 Her cares imperfect to our godlike guest.
Suppliant to her, since first he chose to pray,
Why not her self did she conduct the way,
And with her handmaids to our court convey?

Heroe and King! (*Ulysses* thus reply'd)

390 Nor blame her faultless, nor suspect of pride:
She bade me follow in th' attendant train;
But fear and rev'rence did my steps detain,

Left

narration goes on without the least interruption: It is not the Poet who speaks, nor does he suspend the narration to make a refining reflection, or give us a sentence of Morality. Is his Poetry the worse, because he makes his agents speak weightily and sententiously? It is true, sentences used without moderation are absurd in Epic Poetry; they give it a seriousness that is more becoming the gravity of Philosophers, than the Spirit and Majesty of Poetry. *Bossu* judiciously observes, that such thoughts have in their very nature a certain kind of calm Wisdom that is contrary to the passions; but says he, sentences make a Poem useful, and it seems natural to imagine, that the more a work is embellish'd with them, the more it deserves that general approbation which *Horace* promises to those who have the art to mix the profitable with the pleasant. In short, sentences are not only allowable but beautiful in Heroic Poetry, if they are introduc'd with propriety, and without affectation.

v. 391. *She bade me follow——*

But fear and rev'rence, &c.]

This is directly contrary to what is before asserted in the preceding
G 2 book,

Lest rash suspicion might alarm thy mind:

Man's of a jealous and mistaking kind.

395 Far from my soul (he cry'd) the Gods efface
All wrath ill-grounded, and suspicion base!
Whate'er is honest, Stranger, I approve,
And would to *Phœbus*, *Pallas*, and to *Jove*,
Such as thou art, thy thought and mine were one,
400 Nor thou unwilling to be call'd my son.

In

book, where *Nausicaa* forbids *Ulysses* to attend her, to avoid suspicion and slander: Is not *Ulysses* then guilty of falshood, and is not falshood beneath the character of a Heroe? *Enstathius* confesses that *Ulysses* is guilty *παρεπὰς ψεύδεται*, and he adds, that a wise man may do so sometimes opportunely. "Οτις ἀν' αὐτοῦ ἐν καιρῷ ὁ σοφός. I fear this concession of the Bishop's would not pass for good casuistry in these ages. *Spondanus* is of the same opinion as *Enstathius*; *Vir prudens certo loco & tempore mendacis officiosissimis uti novit*. *Dacier* confesses that he somewhat disguises the truth. It will be difficult to vindicate *Ulysses* from the imputation, if the notions of truth and falshood were as strict in former, as in these ages: but we must not measure by this standard: It is certain, that anciently Lying was reckon'd no crime by a whole nation; and it still bears a dispute, *An omne falsi-loquium sit mendacium?* Some Casuists allow of the *officiosum mendacium*, and such is this of *Ulysses*, entirely complemental and officious.

v. 400. *Nor thou unwilling to be call'd my son*—] The Ancients observe, that *Alcinous* very artfully inserts this proposition to *Ulysses*, to prove his veracity. If he had embraced it without hesitation, he would have concluded him an impostor; for it is not conceivable that he should reject all the temptations to marriage made him by *Calypso* a Goddess, and yet immediately embrace this offer of *Alcinous* to marry his daughter. But if we take the passage in another sense, and believe that *Alcinous* spoke sincerely without any secret suspicions, yet his conduct is justifiable. It has I confess appear'd shocking, that *Alcinous*, a King, should at the very first interview offer his daughter to a stranger, who might be a vagrant and impostor: But examples are frequent in Antiquity of

Book VII. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 125

In such alliance could'st thou wish to join,
A Palace stor'd with treasures shou'd be thine.
But if reluctant, who shall force thy stay?

Jove bids to set the stranger on his way,

405 And ships shall wait thee with the morning ray.

'Till then let slumber close thy careful eyes;

The wakeful mariners shall watch the skies,

And seize the moment when the breezes rise:

Then gently waft thee to the pleasing shore,

410 Where thy soul rests, and labour is no more.

Far as *Eubæa* tho' thy country lay,

Our ships with ease transport thee in a day.

of marriages thus concluded between strangers, and with as little hesitation: Thus *Bellerophon*, *Tydeus*, and *Polynices* were married. Great personages regarded not riches, but were only solicitous to procure worthy Husbands for their daughters, and birth and virtue were the best recommendations.

It is observable that in the original there is a Chasm, an Infinitive mood without any thing to govern it; we must therefore supply the word *ἐβίλοις* to make it right construction. *Enstathius*.

v. 411. *Far as Eubæa tho' thy country lay.*] *Eubæa*, as *Enstathius* observes, is really far distant from *Cercyra*, the country of the *Phæacians*: But *Alcinous* still makes it more distant, by placing it in another part of the world, and describing it as one of the fortunate Islands; for in the fourth book *Rhadamanthus* is said to inhabit the *Elysian* fields. *Alcinous* therefore endeavours to have it believ'd that his Isle is near those fields, by asserting that *Rhadamanthus* made use of *Phæacian* vessels in his voyage to *Tityus*. *Enstathius* further adds, that *Rhadamanthus* was a Prince of great justice, and *Tityus* a person of great impiety, and that he made this voyage to bring him over to more virtuous dispositions.

126 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII.

* Ti- Thither of old, Earth's * Giant-son to view,
 syns. On wings of winds with *Rhadamanth* they flew:

415 This land, from whence their morning course begun,
 Saw them returning with the setting sun.

Your eyes shall witness and confirm my tale,
 Our youth how dext'rous, and how fleet our sail,

V. 415. *The land, from whence their morning course begun,
 Saw them returning with the setting sun.* If Homer had given the true situation of *Corcyra* as it really lies opposite to *Epirus*, yet the Hyperbole of sailing thence to *Enbea* and returning in the same day, had been utterly an impossibility; for in sailing thither they must pass the *Ionian* and *Icarian* seas, and double the *Peloponnesus*. But the fiction is yet more extravagant, by the Poet's placing it still more distant near the *Fortunate Islands*. But what is impossible for vessels to effect, that are as swift as birds, and can sail with the rapidity of a thought? *Eustathius*.

But then is the Poet justifiable for relating such incredible amplifications? It may be answer'd, if he had put these extravagancies into the mouth of *Ulysses*, he had been unpardonable, but they suit well with the character of *Alcinous*: They let *Ulysses* into his disposition, and he appears to be ignorant, credulous, and ostentatious. This was necessary, that *Ulysses* might know how to adapt himself to his humour, and engage his assistance; and this he actually brings about by raising his wonder and esteem by stories, that could not fail to please such an ignorant and credulous person as *Alcinous*.

Dacier adds, that the *Pheacians* were so puff'd up with their constant felicity and the protection of the Gods, that they thought nothing impossible; upon this opinion all these Hyperboles are founded: And this agrees too well with human nature; the more happy men are, the more high and extravagantly they talk; and are too apt to entertain themselves with wild *Chimæra's* which have no existence but in the Imagination.

The moral then of these fables of *Alcinous* is, that a constant series of happiness intoxicates the mind, and that moderation is often learn'd in the school of adversity.

When

Book VII. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 127

When justly tim'd with equal sweep they row,

420 And Ocean whitens in long tracts below.

Thus he. No word th' experienc'd man replies,

But thus to heav'n (and heav'nward lifts his eyes)

O *Jove!* oh father! what the King accords

Do thou make perfect! sacred be his words!

425 Wide o'er the world *Alcinous'* glory shine!

Let Fame be his, and ah! my country mine!

Mean-time *Arete*, for the hour of rest

Ordains the fleecy couch, and cov'ring vest;

Bids her fair train the purple quilts prepare,

430 And the thick carpets spread with busy care.

With torches blazing in their hands they pass,

And finish'd all their Queen's command with haste:

Then gave the signal to the willing guest;

He rose with pleasure, and retir'd to rest.

435 There, soft-extended, to the murm'ring sound

Of the high porch, *Ulysses* sleeps profound:

v. 423. *The prayer of Ulysses.*] It is observable, that *Ulysses* makes no reply directly to the obliging proposition which the King made concerning his daughter. A refusal might have been disadvantageous to his present circumstances, yet an answer is imply'd in this prayer, which shews the impatience he has to return to his country, and the gratitude he feels for his promises to effect it: and consequently it discovers that he has no intentions of settling with his daughter amongst the *Phaicians*. *Dacier.*

128 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII.

Within, releas'd from cares *Alcinous* lies;
And fast beside, were clos'd *Arete's* eyes.

v. 437, 438. *The last lines.*] It may seem somewhat extraordinary, that *Alcinous* and his Queen who have been describ'd as patterns of conjugal happiness should sleep in distinct beds. *Jupiter* and *Juno*, as *Dacier* observes from the first of the *Iliad*, have the same bed. Perhaps the Poet design'd to shew the luxury and false delicacy of those too happy *Phaicians*, who liv'd in such softness that they shunn'd every thing that might prove troublesome or incommodious.

This book takes up no longer time than the evening of the thirty second day.



THE



Mars and Venus surpriz'd by Vulcan.

THE
EIGHTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

111

G 5



The A R G U M E N T.

Alcinous calls a Council, in which it is resolved to transport Ulysses into his country. After which splendid entertainments are made, where the celebrated Musician and Poet Demodocus, plays and sings to the guests. They next proceed to the games, the race, the wrestling, Discus, &c. where Ulysses casts a prodigious length, to the admiration of all the spectators. They return again to the banquet, and Demodocus sings the loves of Mars and Venus. Ulysses, after a compliment to the Poet, desires him to sing the introduction of the wooden horse into Troy; which subject provoking his tears, Alcinous enquires of his guest, his name, parentage and fortunes.

THE

T H E
E I G H T H B O O K
O F T H E
O D Y S S E Y.

NOW fair *Aurora* lifts her golden ray,
And all the ruddy Orient flames with day:

Alcinous;

This book has been more severely censur'd by the Critics than any in the whole *Odyssey*: It may therefore be thought necessary to lay before the Reader what may be offer'd in the Poet's vindication.

Scaliger in his *Poetics* is very warm against it. *Demodocus*, observes that Critic, sings the lust of the Gods (*foeditates*) at the feast of *Alcinous*. And *Bossu*, tho' he vindicates the Poet, remarks that we meet with some offensive passages in *Homer*, and instances in the adultery of *Mars* and *Venus*.

To know (says *Aristotle* in his *Art of Poetry*) whether a thing be well or ill spoken, we must not only examine the thing whether it be good or ill, but we must also have regard to him that speaks or acts, and to the person to whom the Poet addresses: for the character of the person who speaks, and of him to whom he speaks, makes that to be good, which would not come well from the mouth of any other person. 'Tis on this account we vindicate *Homer* with respect to the Immorality that is found in the fable of the Adultery of *Mars* and *Venus*; We must consider that it is neither the Poet, nor his Heroe, that recites that story:

G 6 but

Alcinous, and the chief with dawning light,
Rose instant from the slumbers of the night;

but a *Phæacian* sings it to *Phæacians*, a soft effeminate people, at a festival. Besides, it is allowable even in grave and moral writings to introduce vicious persons, who despise the Gods; and is not the Poet oblig'd to adapt his Poetry to the characters of such persons? And had it not been an absurdity in him to have given us a Philosophical or Moral song before a people who would be pleas'd with nothing but gaiety and effeminacy? The Moral that we are to draw from this story is, that an idle and soft course of life is the source of all criminal pleasures; and that those persons who lead such lives, are generally pleas'd to hear such stories, as make their betters partakers in the same vices. This relation of *Homer* is a useful lesson to them who desire to live virtuously; and it teaches, that if we would not be guilty of such vices, we must avoid such a method of life as inevitably leads to the practice of them.

Rapine attacks this book on another side, and blames it not for its Immorality, but Lowness. *Homer*, says he, puts off that air of grandeur and majesty which so properly belongs to his character, he debases himself into a Droll, and sinks into a familiar way of talking: he turns things into ridicule, by endeavouring to entertain his Reader with something pleasant and diverting: For instance, in the eighth book of the *Odyssey*, he entertains the Gods with a Comedy, some of whom he makes buffoons: *Mars* and *Venus* are introduced upon the stage, taken in a net laid by *Vulcan*, contrary to the gravity which is so essential to Epic Poetry.

It must be granted, that the Gods are here painted in colours unworthy of Deities, yet still with propriety, if we respect the spectators, who are ignorant, debauch'd *Phæacians*. *Homer* was oblig'd to draw them not according to his own idea of the Gods, but according to the wild fancies of the *Phæacians*. The Poet is not at liberty to ascribe the wisdom of a *Socrates* to *Alcinous*: He must follow Nature, and like a painter he may draw Deities or monsters, and introduce as he pleases either vicious or virtuous characters, provided he always makes them of a piece, consistent with their first representation.

This rule of *Aristotle* in general vindicates *Homer*, and 'tis necessary to carry it in our minds, because it ought to be apply'd to all incidents that relate to the *Phæacians*, in the sequel of the *Odyssey*.

5 Then to the Council-seat they bend their way,
And fill the shining thrones along the bay.

Mean-while *Minerva* in her guardian care
Shoots from the starry vault thro' fields of air;
In form a herald of the King she flies.

10 From Peer to Peer, and thus incessant cries.

Nobles and Chiefs who rule *Phœacia's* states,
The King in council your attendance waits:
A Prince of grace divine your aid implores,
O'er unknown seas arriv'd from unknown shores.

She

v. 6. *And fill the shining thrones along the bay.*] This place of Council was between the two ports, where the Temple of *Neptune* stood; probably, like that in the second book, open to the air.

v. 9. *In form a herald*——] It may be ask'd what occasion there is to introduce a Goddess; to perform an action that might have been as well executed by a real Herald? *Eustathius* observes, that this *Minerva* is either Fame, which informs the *Phœacians* that a stranger of uncommon figure is arriv'd, and upon this report they assemble; or it implies, that this assembly was made by the wisdom of the Peers, and consequently a Poet may ascribe it to the Goddess of Wisdom, it being the effect of her inspiration.

The Poet by the introduction of a Deity warns us, that something of importance is to succeed; this is to be usher'd in with solemnity, and consequently the appearance of *Minerva* in this place is not unnecessary: The action of importance to be describ'd is no less than the change of the fortunes of *Ulysses*; it is from this assembly that his affairs take a new turn, and hasten to a happy re-establishment.

v. 13. *A Prince of form divine*——] *Minerva* speaks thus in favour of *Ulysses*, to excite the curiosity of the *Phœacians*: and indeed the short speech is excellently adapted to this purpose. They were fond of strangers: The Goddess therefore tells them, that a stranger is arriv'd of a God-like appearance. They admir'd outward show, he is therefore describ'd as a man of extraordinary

17

- 15 She spoke, and sudden with tumultuous sounds
 Of thronging multitudes the shore rebounds;
 At once the seats they fill: and every eye
 Gaz'd, as before some brother of the sky.
Pallas with grace divine his form improves,
 20 More high he treads, and more enlarg'd he moves:
 She sheds celestial bloom, regard to draw,
 And gives a dignity of mien, to awe,
 With strength the future prize of fame to play,
 And gather all the honours of the day.

ry beauty, and *Minerva* for this reason immediately improves it. *Enstathius*.

v. 19. *Pallas with grace divine his form improves.*] This circumstance has been repeated several times almost in the same words, since the beginning of the *Odyssey*. I cannot be of opinion that such repetitions are beauties. In any other Poet, they might have been thought to proceed from a poverty of invention, tho' certainly not in *Homer*, in whom there is rather a superfluity than barrenness. Perhaps having once said a thing well, he despair'd of improving it, and so repeated it; or perhaps he intended to inculcate this truth, that all our accomplishments, as beauty, strength, &c. are the gifts of the Gods; and being willing to fix it upon the mind, he dwells upon it, and inserts it in many places. Here indeed it has a particular propriety, as it is a circumstance that first engages the *Phæacians* in the favour of *Ulysses*: his beauty was his first recommendation, and consequently the Poet with great judgment sets his Heroe off to the best advantage, it being an incident from which he dates all his future happiness; and therefore to be insisted upon with a particular solemnity. *Plato* in his *Theatetus* applies the latter part of this description to *Parmenides*. Ἀνδρὸς τε μοῖ φαινέται εἶναι ἀμα δυνὸς τε.

Then

- 25 Then from his glitt'ring throne *Alcinous* rose;
 Attend, he cry'd, while we our will disclose,
 Your present aid this godlike stranger craves,
 Tost by rude tempest thro' a war of waves:
 Perhaps from realms that view the rising day,
 30 Or nations subject to the western ray.
 Then grant, what here all sons of woe obtain,
 (For here affliction never pleads in vain:)
 Be chosen youths prepar'd, expert to try
 The vast profound, and bid the vessel fly:

v. 25. *From his glitt'ring throne Alcinous rose.*] It might be expected that *Ulysses*, upon whose account alone *Alcinous* calls this assembly, should have made his condition known, and spoken himself to the *Phaeacians*; whereas he appears upon the stage as a mute person, and the multitude departs entirely ignorant of his name and fortunes. It may be answer'd, that this was not a proper time for a fuller discovery, the Poet defers it till *Ulysses* had distinguish'd himself in the games, and fully rais'd their curiosity. It is for the same reason that *Ulysses* is silent; if he had spoken he could not have avoided to let them into the knowledge of his condition, but the contrary method is greatly for his advantage, and assures him of success from the recommendation of a King.

But there is another, and perhaps a better reason, to be given for this silence of *Ulysses*: The Poet reserves the whole story of his sufferings for an entire and uninterrupted narration; if he had now made any discovery, he must afterwards either have fall'n into tautology, or broken the thread of the relation, so that it would not have been of a piece, but wanted continuity. Besides, it comes with more weight at once, than if it had been made at several times, and consequently makes a deeper impression upon the memory and passion of the auditors. *Virgil* has taken a different method in the discovery of *Aeneas*; there was a necessity for it; his companions, to engage *Dido* in their protection, tell her they belong to no less a Heroe than *Aeneas*, so that he is in a manner known before he appears; but *Virgil* after the example of *Homer* reserves his story for an entire narration.

Launch

- 35 Launch the tall bark, and order ev'ry oar,
 Then in our court indulge the genial hour:
 Instant you sailors to this task attend,
 Swift to the palace, all ye Peers ascend:
 Let none to strangers honours due disclaim;
- 40 Be there *Demodocus*, the Bard of fame,
 Taught by the Gods to please, when high he sings
 The vocal lay responsive to the strings.
- Thus spoke the Prince: th'attending Peers obey,
 In state they move; *Alcinous* leads the way:
- 45 Swift to *Demodocus* the herald flies,
 At once the sailors to their charge arise:
 They launch the vessel, and unfurl the sails,
 And stretch the swelling canvas to the gales;

v. 35. *Launch the tall bark*—] The word in the original is *ἐκπορεύεσθαι*; which signifies not only a ship that makes its first voyage, but a ship that out-sails other ships, as *Enstathius* observes. It is not possible for a translator to retain such singularities with any beauty; it would seem pedantry and affectation, and not Poetry.

v. 41. *Taught by the Gods to please*—] *Homer* here insinuates, that all good and great qualities are the gifts of God. He shews us likewise, that Music was constantly made use of in the Courts of all the Oriental Princes; we have seen *Phemius* in *Ithaca*, a second in *Lacedæmon* with *Menelaus*, and *Demodocus* here with *Alcinous*. The *Hebrews* were likewise of remarkable skill in Music; every one knows what effect the harp of *David* had upon the spirit of *Saul*. *Solomon* tells us, that he sought out singing men and singing women to entertain him, like these in *Homer*, at the time of feasting: Thus another oriental Writer compares Music as seals to an emerald enclos'd in gold: as a signet of an emerald set in a work of gold, so is the melody of music with pleasant words. *Eccl. xxxii. 6.* *Dacier.*

Then

Then to the palace move: A gath'ring throng,
 Youth, and white age, tumultuous pour along:
 Now all accesses to the dome are fill'd;
 Eight boars, the choicest of the herd, are kill'd:
 Two beeves, twelve fatlings from the flock they bring
 To crown the feast, so wills the bounteous King.
 The herald now arrives, and guides along
 The sacred master of celestial song:
 Dear to the Muse! who gave his days to flow
 With mighty blessings, mix'd with mighty woe:

With

v. 57. *Dear to the Muse! who gave his days to flow
 With mighty blessings, mix'd with mighty woe.*]

It has been generally thought that *Homer* represents himself in the person of *Demodocus*: and *Dacier* imagines that this passage gave occasion to the Ancients to believe that *Homer* was blind. But that he really was blind is testify'd by himself in his Hymn to *Apollo*, which *Thucydides* asserts to be the genuine production of *Homer*, and quotes it as such in his history.

ὦ κῆρες τίς δ' ὑμῖν ἀνὴρ ἥδιστος αἰδοῖν
 Ἐνθάδ' ἀπολαΐτας καὶ τῷ τέρπειθε μάλιστα;
 Τμῆς δ' ἐν μάλα πᾶσας ὑπακρίνασθε ἐφ' ὑμῖν
 Τυράντης ἀνὴρ—

That is, "O Virgins, if any person asks you who is he, the most pleasing of all Poets, who frequents this place, and who is he who most delights you? reply, he is a blind man, &c." 'Tis true, as *Enstathius* observes, that there are many features in the two Poets that bear a great resemblance; *Demodocus* sings divinely, the same is true of *Homer*; *Demodocus* sings the adventures of the Greeks before *Troy*, so does *Homer* in his *Iliads*.

If this be true, it must be allow'd that *Homer* has found out a way of commending himself very artfully: Had he spoken plainly,

With clouds of darkness quench'd his visual ray,

60 But gave him skill to raise the lofty lay.

High on a radiant throne sublime in state,

Encircled by huge multitudes, he sat :

With silver shone the throne ; his Lyre well strung

To rapturous sounds, at hand *Pantheon* hung :

65 Before his seat a polish'd table shines,

And a full goblet foams with gen'rous wines :

His food a herald bore : And now they fed ;

And now the rage of craving hunger fled.

Then fir'd by all the Muse, aloud he sings

70 The mighty deeds of Demigods and Kings :

From that fierce wrath the noble song arose,

That made *Ulysses* and *Achilles* foes :

ly, he had been extravagantly vain ; but by this indirect way of praise, the Reader is at liberty to apply it either solely to *Demodocus*, or obliquely to *Homer*.

It is remarkable, that *Homer* takes a very extraordinary care of *Demodocus* his brother Poet ; and introduces him as a person of great distinction. He calls him in this book the Heroe *Demodocus* : He places him on a throne studded with silver, and gives him an herald for his attendant, nor is he less careful to provide for his entertainment, he has a particular table, and a capacious bowl set before him to drink as often as he had a mind, as the original expresses it. Some merry wits have turn'd the last circumstance into raillery, and insinuate that *Homer* in this place as well as in the former means himself in the person of *Demodocus*, an intimation that he would not be pleas'd to meet with the like hospitality.

How

How o'er the feast they doom the fall of *Troy*;

The stern debate *Atrides* hears with joy:

75 For heav'n foretold the contest, when he trod

The marble threshold of the *Delphic* God,

Curious to learn the counsels of the sky,

Ere yet he loos'd the rage of war on *Troy*.

Touch'd at the song, *Ulysses* strait resign'd

80 To soft affliction all his manly mind:

Before

v. 74. *The stern debate Atrides heard with joy.*] This passage is not without obscurity, but *Eustathius* thus explains it from *Athenae*; In the *Iliads* the Generals sup with *Agamemnon* with sobriety and moderation; and if in the *Odyssey* we see *Achilles* and *Ulysses* in contention to the great satisfaction of *Agamemnon*, it is because these contentions are of use to his affairs; they contend whether force or stratagem is to be employed to take *Troy*; *Achilles* after the death of *Hector*, persuaded to assault it by storm, *Ulysses* by stratagem. There is a further reason given for the satisfaction which *Agamemnon* expresses at the contest of these two Heroes: Before the opening of the war of *Troy* he consulted the oracle concerning the issue of it; *Apollo* answer'd, that *Troy* should be taken when two Princes most renown'd for wisdom and valour should contend at a sacrifice of the Gods; *Agamemnon* rejoices to see the prediction fulfill'd, knowing that the destruction of *Troy* was at hand, the Oracle being accomplish'd by the contest of *Ulysses* and *Achilles*.

v. 79. *Touch'd at the song.*——] Many objections may be made against this relation; it may seem to offend against probability, and appears somewhat incredible, that *Demodocus* should thus luckily pitch upon the war of *Troy* for the subject of his song, and still more happily upon the deeds of *Ulysses*; for instance, a man may die of an Apoplexy, this is probable; but that this should happen just when the Poet has occasion for it, is in some degree incredible. But this objection will cease, if we consider not only that the war of *Troy* was the greatest event of those ages, and consequently might be the common subject of entertainment; but also that it is not *Homer* or *Demodocus* who relates the story, but the

Before his eyes the purple vest he drew,

Industrious to conceal the falling dew :

But when the music paus'd, he ceas'd to shed

The flowing tear, and rais'd his drooping head :

85 And lifting to the Gods a goblet crown'd,

He pour'd a pure libation to the ground.

Transported with the song, the list'ning train

Again with loud applause demand the strain :

Again *Ulysses* veil'd his pensive head,

90 Again unmann'd a show'r of sorrow shed :

the Muse who inspires it: *Homer* several times in this book ascribes the song to immediate inspiration; and this supernatural assistance reconciles it to human probability, and the story becomes credible when it is suppos'd to be related by a Deity. *Aristotle* in his *Poetics* commends this conduct as artful and judicious; *Alcinous*, says he, invites *Ulysses* to an entertainment to divert him, where *Demodocus* sings his actions, at which he cannot refrain from tears, which *Alcinous* perceives, and this brings about the discovery of *Ulysses*.

It may further be objected, that a sufficient cause for this violence of tears is not apparent; for why should *Ulysses* weep to hear his own brave achievements, especially when nothing calamitous is recited? This indeed would be improbable, if that were the whole of what the Poet sung: But *Homer* only gives us the heads of the song, a few sketches of a larger draught, and leaves something to be fill'd up by the imagination of the reader. Thus for instance the words of *Demodocus* recall'd to the mind of *Ulysses* all the hardships he had undergone during a ten years war, all the scenes of horror he had beheld, and the loss and sufferings of all his friends. And no doubt he might weep even for the calamities he brought upon *Troy*, an ingenuous nature cannot be insensible when any of its own species suffers; the *Trojans* were his enemies, but still they were men, and compassion is due even to unfortunate enemies. I doubt not but it will be allow'd, that there is here sufficient cause to draw tears from a hero, unless a hero must be supposed to be divested of humanity.

Conceal'd

Conceal'd he wept: the King observ'd alone
 The silent tear, and heard the secret groan:
 Then to the Bard aloud: O cease to sing,
 Dumb be thy voice, and mute th' harmonious string;

95 Enough the feast has pleas'd, enough the pow'r
 Of heav'nly song has crown'd the genial hour!
 Incessant in the games your strength display,
 Contest, ye brave, the honours of the day!
 That pleas'd th' admiring stranger may proclaim

100 In distant regions the *Phaacian* fame:
 None wield the gauntlet with so dire a sway,
 Or swifter in the race devour the way:
 None in the leap spring with so strong a bound,
 Or firmer, in the wrestling, press the ground,

105 Thus spoke the King; th' attending Peers obey:
 In state they move, *Alcinous* leads the way:
 His golden lyre *Demodocus* unstrung,
 High on a column in the palace hung:

v. 101. *None wield the gauntlet with so dire a sway.*] *Enslas-
 thus* asks how *Alcinous* could make such an assertion, and give the
 preference to his people before all nations, when he neither knew,
 nor was known to, any heroes out of his own Island? He answers
 that he speaks like a *Phaacian*, with ostentation and vanity; be-
 sides it is natural for all people to form, not illaudably, too fa-
 vourable a judgment of their own country; And this agrees with
 the character of the *Phaicians* in a more particular manner, who
 call'd themselves *αἰγιόχοι*, and the favourites of the Gods.

And

142 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VIII.

And guided by a herald's guardian cares,

110 Majestic to the lists of Fame repairs.

Now swarms the populace; a countless throng,

Youth and hoar age; and man drives man along:

The games begin: Ambitious of the prize,

Acronæus, *Thoon*, and *Eretmæus* rise;

115 The prize *Ocyalus* and *Prymneus* claim,

Anchialus and *Pontæus*, chiefs of fame:

There *Proreus*, *Nautes*, *Eratreus* appear,

And fam'd *Amphialus*, *Polymæus'* heir:

Euryalus, like *Mars* terrific, rose,

120 When clad in wrath he withers hosts of foes:

Naubolus

v. 113. *The Games.*——] *Eustathius* remarks, that *Homer* very judiciously passes over these games in a few lines, having in the *Iliad* exhausted that subject; he there enlarg'd upon them, because they were essential ornaments, it being necessary that *Patroclus* should be honour'd by his friend with the utmost solemnity. Here they are only introduc'd occasionally, and therefore the Poet hastens to things more requisite, and carries on the thread of his story. But then it may be ask'd why are they mention'd at all, and what do they contribute to the re-establishment of *Ulysses*? It is evident that they are not without an happy effect, they give *Ulysses* an opportunity to signalize his character, to engage the King and the Peers in his favour, and induces them to convey him to his own country, which is one of the most material incidents in the whole *Odyssey*.

v. 119. *Euryalus, like Mars terrific, rose.*] I was at a loss for a reason why this figure of terror was introduc'd amongst an unwarlike nation, upon an occasion contrary to the general description in the midst of games and diversions. *Eustathius* takes notice, that the Poet distinguishes the character of *Euryalus*, to force it upon our observation; he being the person who uses *Ulysses* with roughness

Naubolides with grace unequal'd shone,

Or equal'd by *Laodamas* alone.

With these came forth *Ambasineus* the strong;

And three brave sons, from great *Alcinous* sprung.

25 Rang'd in a line the ready racers stand,

Start from the goal, and vanish o'er the strand:

Swift as on wings of winds upborn they fly,

And drifts of rising dust involve the sky:

Before the rest, what space the hinds allow

30 Between the mule and ox, from plow to plow;

Clytonius

roughness and inhumanity, and is the only Peer that is describ'd with a sword, which he gives to *Ulysses* to repair his injury.

He further remarks, that almost all the names of the persons who are mention'd as candidates in these games are borrow'd from the sea, *Phœacia* being an Island, and the people greatly addicted to navigation. I have taken the liberty to vary from the order observ'd by *Homer* in the catalogue of the names, to avoid the affinity of sound in many of them, as *Emyalus*, *Ocyalus*, &c. and too many names being tedious at least in *English* Poetry, I pass'd over the three sons of *Alcinous*, *Laodamas*, *Halius*, and *Eronemus*, and only mention'd them in general as the sons of *Alcinous*.

I was surpriz'd to see *Dacier* render

——— υἱὸς Πολυνῆς Τεκτονίδας

The son of *Polynus* the carpenter: it looks like Burlesque: it ought to be render'd, The son of *Polynus* *Textonides*, a *Patronymic*, and it is so understood by all Commentators.

V. 129. ——— *What space the hinds allow*

Between the Mule and Ox, from plow to plow.

This image drawn from rural affairs is now become obsolete, and gives us no distinct Idea of the distance between *Clytonius* and the other racers: but this obscurity arises not from *Homer's* want of perspicuity, but from the change which has happen'd in the method of tillage, and from a length of time which has effaced the distinct
image

Clytonius sprung: he wing'd the rapid way,
And bore th' unrival'd honours of the day.
With fierce embrace the brawny wrestlers joyn;
The conquest, great *Euryalus*, is thine.

135 *Amphialus* sprung forward with a bound,
Superior in the leap, a length of ground:
From *Elateus*' strong arm the Discus flies,
And sings with unmatch'd force along the skies.
And *Laodame* whirls high, with dreadful sway,

140 The gloves of death, victorious in the fray.
While thus the Peerage in the games contends,
In act to speak, *Laodamas* ascends:

O friends, he cries, the stranger seems well skill'd
To try th' illustrious labours of the field:

image which was originally stamp'd upon it; so that what was understood universally in the days of *Homer* is grown almost unintelligible to posterity. *Enstathius* only observes, that the teams of Mules were placed at some distance from the teams of Oxen; the Mule being more swift in his labour than the Ox, and consequently more ground was allow'd to the Mule than the Ox by the Husbandman. This gives us an Idea that *Clytencus* was the foremost of the racers, but how much is not to be discover'd with any certainty. *Aristarchus*, as *Didymus* informs us, thus interprets *Homer*: "As much as a yoke of mules set to work at the same time with a yoke of oxen, outgoes the oxen, (for mules are swifter than oxen) so much *Clytencus* outwent his competitors." The same description occurs in the tenth book of the *Iliads*, verse 419, to which passage I refer the Reader for a more large and different explication.

I deem

- 145 I deem him brave; then grant the brave man's claim,
 Invite the Hero to his share of fame.
 What nervous arms he boasts! how firm his tread!
 His limbs how turn'd! how broad his shoulders spread!
 By age unbroke! — but all-consuming care
- 150 Destroys perhaps the strength that time wou'd spare:
 Dire is the Ocean, dread in all its forms!
 Man must decay, when man contends with storms.
 Well hast thou spoke, (*Euryalus* replies)
 Thine is the guest, invite him thou to rise.
- 155 Swift at the word advancing from the croud
 He made obeysance, and thus spoke aloud.
 Vouchsafes the rev'rend stranger to display
 His manly worth, and share the glorious day?

v. 149. *By age unbroke!*] It is in the original literally, *he wants not youth*; this is spoken according to appearance only, for *Ulysses* must be suppos'd to be above forty, having spent twenty years in the wars of *Troy*, and in his return to his country. 'Tis true *Hesiod* calls a person a youth, *αιζήνῳ*, who was forty years of age, but this must be understood with some allowance, unless we suppose that the life of man was longer in the times of *Hesiod*, than in these later ages; the contrary of which appears from many places in *Homer*, where the shortness of man's life is compar'd to the leaves of trees, &c. But what the Poet here relates is very justifiable, for the Youth which *Ulysses* appears to have, proceeds from *Minerva*; it is not a natural quality, but conferr'd by the immediate operation of a Goddess.

This speech concludes with an address of great beauty; *Laodamas* invites *Ulysses* to act in the games, yet at the same time furnishes him with a decent excuse, to decline the invitation if it be against his inclinations; should he refuse, he imputes the refusal to his calamities, not to any want of skill, or personal inability.

146 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VIII.

Father, arise! for thee thy port proclaims

160 Expert to conquer in the solemn games.

To fame arise! for what more fame can yield

Than the swift race, or conflict of the field?

Steal from corroding care one transient day,

To glory give the space thou hast to stay;

165 Short is the time, and lo! ev'n now the gales

Call thee aboard, and stretch the swelling sails.

To whom with sighs *Ulysses* gave reply:

Ah why th' ill-suiting pastime must I try?

To gloomy care my thoughts alone are free;

170 Ill the gay sports with troubled hearts agree:

Sad from my natal hour my days have ran,

A much-afflicted, much-enduring man!

Who suppliant to the King and Peers, implores

A speedy voyage to his native shores.

175 Wide wanders, *Laodame*, thy erring tongue,

The sports of glory to the brave belong,

v. 167. ————*Ulysses gave reply.*] These are the first words spoken by *Ulysses* before the *Phaeacians*; and we cannot but be curious to know how he makes his address to engage a people, in whom he has no personal interest, in his favour. His speech is excellently adapted to this purpose; he represents himself as a suppliant to the King and all the assembly; and all suppliants being esteem'd sacred, he at once makes it a duty in all the assembly to protect him; if they refuse to assist him, they become guilty of no less a crime, than a violation of the laws of hospitality.

(Retorts

(Retorts *Esayalus* :) He boasts no claim
 Among the great, unlike the sons of Fame.
 A wand'ring merchant he frequents the main,
 80 Some mean sea-farer in pursuit of gain;
 Studious of freight, in naval trade well skill'd,
 But dreads th' athletic labours of the field.

Incens'd *Ulysses* with a frown replies,
 O forward to proclaim thy soul unwise!

85 With partial hands the Gods their gifts dispense;
 Some greatly think, some speak with manly sense;
 Here heav'n an elegance of form denies,
 But wisdom the defect of form supplies:
 This man with energy of thought controuls,

90 And steals with modest violence our souls,

He

v. 190. *And steals with modest violence our souls,*

He speaks reserv'dly, but he speaks with force.]

There is a difficulty in the Greek expression, ἀσφαλῶς ἀγορεύει, αἰδοῖ μὴ δρῆν; that is, "he speaks securely with a winning modesty." *Dionysius Halicarnassus* interprets it, in his *Examination of Oratory*, to signify that the Orator argues *per concessa*, and so proceeds with certainty, or ἀσφαλῶς; without danger of refutation. The word properly signifies without *stumbling*, ἀπροσκόπως, as in the proverb cited by *Eusebius*, φορητότερον ποσὶν ἢ περ γλῶττι προσκῶπτεν; that is, "it is better to stumble with the feet than "with the tongue." The words are concise, but of a very extensive comprehension, and take in every thing, both in sentiments and diction, that enters into the character of a compleat orator. *Dacier* concurs in the same interpretation; *He speaks reserv'dly, or with caution; he hazards nothing that he would afterwards wish (repentir) to alter. And all his words are full of sweetness and modesty.* These two lines are found almost literally in *Hesiod's Theogony*, ver. 92.

148 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VIII.

He speaks reserv'dly, but he speaks with force,
Nor can one word be chang'd but for a worse;
In public more than mortal he appears,
And as he moves the gazing croud reverts.

195 While othersauteous as th' æthereal kind,
The nobler portion want, a knowing mind.
In outward show heav'n gives thee to excell,
But heav'n denies the praise of thinking well.
Ill bear the brave a rude ungovern'd tongue,
200 And, youth, my gen'rous soul'resents the wrong:
Skill'd in heroic exercise, I claim
A post of honour with the sons of Fame:

Such

Ἐρχομένον δ' ἀνὰ ἄστυ, θεὸν ὡς ἰλάσκοντα
Αἰδοῖ μισοχίη. Μιστὰ δὲ ἀρέπαι ἀγχομένον.

Whether *Homer* borrow'd these verses from *Hesiod*, or *Hesiod* from *Homer*, is not evident. *Tully* in his book *de Senectute* is of opinion, that *Homer* preceded *Hesiod* many ages, and consequently in his judgment the verses are *Homer's*. I question not but he had this very passage in view in his third book of his Orator. *Quem stupescit dicentem instructur, quem Deum, ut ita dicam, inter homines putant*; which is almost a translation of *Homer*.

v. 201. Skill'd in heroic exercise, I claim

A post of honour with the sons of Fame.]

It may be thought that *Ulysses*, both here and in his subsequent speech, is too ostentatious, and that he dwells more than modesty allows upon his own accomplishments: But self-praise is sometimes no fault. *Plutarch* has wrote a dissertation, how a man may praise himself without envy: What *Ulysses* here speaks is not a boast but a justification. Persons in distress, says *Plutarch*, may speak of themselves with dignity: It shews a greatness of soul, and that they bear up against the storms of fortune with bravery; they

BookVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 149

Such was my boast, while vigour crown'd my days,
Now care surrounds me, and my force decays;

205 Inur'd a melancholy part to bear,

In scenes of death, by tempest and by war.

Yet thus by woes impair'd, no more I wave

To prove the heroë.—Slander stings the brave,

Then striding forward with a furious bound,

210 He wrench'd a rocky fragment from the ground:

By far more pond'rous and more huge by far,

Than what *Phaacia's* sons discharg'd in air.

Fierce from his arm th' enormous load he flings;

Sonorous thro' the shaded air it flings;

215 Couch'd to the earth, tempestuous as it flies,

The crowd gaze upward while it cleaves the skies.

they have too much courage to fly to pity and commiseration, which betray despair and an hopeless condition: Such a man struggling with ill fortune shews himself a champion, and if by a bravery of speech he transforms himself from miserable and abject, into bold and noble, he is not to be censur'd as vain or obstinate, but great and invincible.

This is a full justification of *Ulysses*, he opposes virtue to calumny; and what *Horace* applies to himself we apply to this Heroë.

Quasitam meritis, sume superbiam.

Besides, it was necessary to shew himself a person of figure and distinction, to recommend his condition to the *Phaaciens*: He was a stranger to the whole nation, and he therefore takes a probable method to engage their assistance by acquainting them with his worth; he describes himself as unfortunate, but yet as a heroë in adversity.

Beyond all marks, with many a giddy round
Down rushing, it up-turns a hill of ground.

That instant *Pallas*, bursting from a cloud,

220 Fix'd a distinguish'd mark, and cry'd aloud.

Ev'n he who fightless wants his visual ray,
May by his touch alone award the day:

Thy signal throw transcends the utmost bound
Of ev'ry champion, by a length of ground:

225 Securely bid the strongest of the train

Arise to throw: the strongest throws in vain.

v. 219. *That instant Pallas, bursting from a cloud.*] There is not a passage in the whole *Odyssey*, where a Deity is introduced with less apparent necessity: The Goddess of Wisdom is brought down from heaven to act what might have been done as well by any of the spectators, namely to proclaim what was self-evident, the victory of *Ulysses*. When a Deity appears, our expectations are awaken'd for the introduction of something important, but what action of importance succeeds? 'Tis true, her appearance encourages *Ulysses*, and immediately upon it he challenges the whole *Phaæcian* assembly. But he was already victor, and no further action is perform'd. If indeed she had appear'd openly in favour of *Ulysses*, this would have been greatly advantageous to him, and the *Phaæcians* must have highly reverenc'd a person who was so remarkably honour'd by a Goddess: but it is not evident that the *Phaæcians*, or even *Ulysses* knew the Deity, but took her for a man as she appear'd to be; and *Ulysses* himself immediately rejoices that he had found a friend in the assembly. If this be true, the descent of *Pallas* will prove very unnecessary; for if she was esteem'd to be merely human, she acts nothing in the character of a Deity, and performs no more than might have been performed by a man, and consequently gave no greater courage to *Ulysses* than a friend actually gave, for such only he believ'd her to be. *Eustathius* appears to be of the same opinion, for he says the place is to be understood allegorically, and what is thus spoken by a *Phaæcian* with Wisdom, is by the Poet apply'd to the Goddess of it.

She

She spoke: and momentary mounts the sky:

The friendly voice *Ulysses* hears with joy;

Then thus aloud, (elate with decent pride)

230 Rise ye *Phaicians*, try your force, he cry'd;

If with this throw the strongest Caster vye,

Still, further still, I bid the Discus fly.

Stand forth, ye champions, who the gauntlet wield,

Or you, the swiftest racers of the field!

235 Stand forth, ye wrestlers, who these pastimes grace!

I wield the gauntlet, and I run the race.

In such heroic games I yield to none,

Or yield to brave *Laodamas* alone:

Shall I with brave *Laodamas* contend?

240 A friend is sacred, and I stile him friend.

Ungen'rous

v. 239. *Shall I with brave Laodamas contend?*

A friend is sacred, and I stile him friend.

Nothing can be more artful than this address of *Ulysses*; he finds a way, in the middle of a bold challenge, to secure himself of a powerful advocate, by paying an ingenious and laudable deference to his friend. But it may be ask'd if decency be observ'd, and ought *Ulysses* to challenge the father *Alcinous*, (for he speaks universally) and yet except his son *Laodamas*, especially when *Alcinous* was more properly his friend than *Laodamas*? and why should he be excepted rather than the 'other brothers? *Spondanus* answers, that the two brothers are included in the person of *Laodamas*, they all have the same relation to *Ulysses*, as being equally a suppliant to them all, and consequently claim the same exemption from this challenge as *Laodamas*; and *Alcinous* is not concern'd in it: he is the judge and arbitrator of the games, not a candidate, like *Achilles* in the *Iliad*. But why is *Laodamas* nam'd in particular? He was the elder brother, and *Ulysses* might therefore be

H 4

confin'd

152 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VIII.

Ungen'rous were the man, and base of heart,
Who takes the kind, and pays th' ungrateful part;
Chiefly the man, in foreign realms confin'd,
Base to his friend, to his own interest blind:

- 245 All, all your heroes I this day defy,
Give me a man that we our might may try!
Expert in ev'ry art I boast the skill
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill;
Should a whole host at once discharge the bow,
250 My well-aim'd shaft with death prevents the foe:
Alone superior in the field of Troy,
Great *Philoctetes* taught the shaft to fly.

confin'd to his care in particular, by the right due to his seniority; besides, he might be the noblest personage, having conquer'd his antagonist at the gauntlet, which was the most dangerous, and consequently the most honourable exercise, and therefore *Ulysses* might pay him peculiar honours. *Spondannus*.

v. 249. *Should a whole host at once discharge the bow,*

My well-aim'd shaft with death prevents the foe.]

There is an ambiguity in the original, and it may imply either, that if *Ulysses* and his friends were at the same time to aim their arrows against an enemy, his arrow would fly with more certainty and expedition than that of his companions: Or that if his enemies had bent all their bows at once against him, yet his shaft would reach his adversary before they could discharge their arrows. *Eustathius* follows the former, *Dacier* the latter interpretation. And certainly the latter argues the greater intrepidity and presence of mind: It shews *Ulysses* in the extremity of danger capable of acting with calmness and serenity, and shooting with the same certainty and steadiness, tho' multitudes of enemies endanger his life. I have follow'd this explication, as it is nobler, and shews *Ulysses* to be a consummate Heroe.

From

From all the sons of earth unrival'd praise

I justly claim; but yield to better days,

255 To those fam'd days when great *Alcides* rose,

And *Eurytus*, who bade the Gods be foes:

(Vain *Eurytus*, whose art became his crime,

Swept from the earth he perish'd in his prime;

Sudden th' irremeable way he trod,

260 Who boldly durst defy the Bowyer God.)

In fighting fields as far the spear I throw,

As flies an arrow from the well-drawn bow.

Sole in the race the contest I decline,

Stiff are my weary joints; and I resign

By

v. 257. *Vain Eurytus.*———] This *Eurytus* was King of *Oechalia*, famous for his skill in Archery; he propos'd his daughter *Iole* in marriage to any person that could conquer him at the exercise of the bow. Later writers differ from *Homer*, as *Eustathius* observes, concerning *Eurytus*. They write that *Hercules* overcame him, and he denying his daughter, was slain, and his daughter made captive by *Hercules*: Whereas *Homer* writes that he was kill'd by *Apollo*, that is, died a sudden death, according to the import of that expression. The Ancients differ much about *Oechalia*; some place it in *Eubaa*, and some in *Messenia*, of which opinion is *Pausanias*. But *Homer* in the *Iliad* places it in *Thessaly*: For he mentions with it *Tricca* and *Ithome*, which as *Dacier* observes were Cities of *Thessaly*.

v. 263. *Sole in the race the contest I decline.*] This is directly contrary to his challenge in the beginning of the speech, where he mentions the race amongst the other games. How then is this difference to be reconcil'd? Very naturally. *Ulysses* speaks with a generous warmth, and is transported with anger in the beginning of his oration: Here the heat of it is cool'd, and consequently reason takes place, and he has time to reflect, that a man so disabled by calamities is not an equal match for a younger and less fatigued

H 5

antago-

265 By storms and hunger worn: Age well may fail,

When storms and hunger both at once assail.

Abash'd, the numbers hear the god-like man,

'Till great *Alcinous* mildly thus began.

antagonist. This is an exact representation of human nature; when our passions remit, the vehemence of our speech remits; at first he speaks like a man in anger, here like the wise *Ulysses*.

It is observable that *Ulysses* all along maintains a decency and reverence towards the Gods, even while his anger seems to be master over his reason; he gives *Eurytus* as an example of the just vengeance of Heaven, and shews himself in a very opposite light: He is so far from contending with the Gods, that he allows himself to be inferior to some other Heroes: an instance of modesty.

v. 265. ——— *Age well may fail,*

When storms and hunger——]

This passage appears to me to refer to the late storms and shipwreck, and the long abstinence *Ulysses* suffer'd in sailing from *Calypso* to the *Phaæcian* Island; for when *Nausicaa* found him, he was almost dead with hunger, as appears from the sixth of the *Odyssey*. *Dacier* is of a different opinion, and thinks it relates to his abstinence and shipwreck upon his leaving *Circe*, before he came to *Calypso*. This seems very improbable; for *Ulysses* had liv'd seven years with that Goddess in great affluence, and consequently must be suppos'd to have recruited his loss of strength in so long a time, and with the particular care of a Goddess: Besides, *Alcinous* was acquainted with his late shipwreck, and his daughter *Nausicaa* was in some degree witness to it: Is it not therefore more probable that he should refer to this latter incident, than speak of a calamity that happened seven years past, to which they were entirely strangers?

Dacier likewise asserts that *Enstathius* is guilty of a mistake, in making *κομιδὴν* or *provision*, to signify the ship it self; but in reality he makes an evident distinction: Οὐ γὰρ διὰ τὸ μὴ κομιδὴν ἐν βρώμασιν ἔχειν ἰδαμάσθην ἰδυσοῦν τοῦ κύμασιν, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἰδραύσθην κύμασιν ἢ κομιδὴν ἔχουσα ναῦς; " *Ulysses* suffer'd not in the storm " because he had no provisions to eat, but because the ship that " bore the provision was broken by the storm;" which shews a wide difference between the vessel and the provisions: So that the expression really implies that the vessel was broken, but *Enstathius* is far from affirming that *κομιδὴν* and *ναῦς* (except in such an improper sense) have the same signification.

Well

Well hast thou spoke, and well thy gen'rous tongue

270 With decent pride refutes a public wrong:

Warm are thy words, but warm without offence;

Fear only fools, secure in men of sense:

Thy worth is known. Then hear our country's claims

And bear to heroes our heroic fame;

275 In distant realms our glorious deeds display,

Repeat them frequent in the genial day;

When blest with ease thy woes and wand'rings end,

Teach them thy consort, bid thy sons attend;

How lov'd of *Jove* he crown'd our fires with praise,

280 How we their offspring dignify our race.

Let other realms the deathful gauntlet wield,

Or boast the glories of th' athletic field;

v. 275. *In distant realms our glorious deeds display.*] From this extravagant preface, it might be imagin'd that *Akimons* was King of a nation of Heroes: Whereas when he comes to explain the excellence of his subjects, he has scarce any thing to boast of that is manly; they spend an idle life in singing, dancing, and feasting. Thus the Poet all along writes consistently: We may know the *Phaicians* by their character, which is always to be voluptuous, or as *Horace* expresses it.

— *Alcinoïque*

In cuncta curandâ plus æquo operata juvenus.

And *Eusebius* rightly observes that the Poet does not teach that we ought to live such lives, but only relates historically what lives were led by the *Phaicians*; he describes them as a contemptible people, and consequently proposes them as objects of our scorn, not imitation.

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We in the course unrival'd speed display,

Or thro' cerulean billows plow the way,

285 To dress, to dance, to sing our sole delight,

The feast or bath by day, and love by night:

Rise then ye skill'd in measures: let him bear

Your fame to men that breathe a distant air:

And faithful say, to you the pow'rs belong

290 To race, to sail, to dance, to chaunt the song.

But, herald, to the palace swift repair,

And the soft Lyre to grace our pastimes bear.

Swift at the word, obedient to the King

The herald flies the tuneful lyre to bring.

295 Up rose nine Seniors, chosen to survey

The future games, the judges of the day:

With instant care they mark a spacious round,

And level for the dance th' allotted ground;

The herald bears the Lyre: Intent to play,

300 The Bard advancing meditates the lay,

Skill'd in the dance, tall youths, a blooming band,

Graceful before the heav'nly minstrel stand;

Light:

W. 301. *Skill'd in the dance*—] I beg leave to translate *Dacier's* Annotation upon this passage, and to offer a remark upon it. This description, says that lady, is remarkable, not because the dancers mov'd to the sound of the harp and the song; for in this there is nothing extraordinary: but in that they danc'd, if I may

10

Book VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 157

Light-bounding from the earth, at once they rise;

Their feet half-viewless quiver in the skies:

305 *Ulysses* gaz'd, astonish'd to survey

The glancing splendors as their sandals play.

Mean-time the Bard alternate to the strings

The loves of *Mars* and *Cytherea* sings;

How

to express it, an History; that is by their gestures and movements they express'd what the music of the harp and voice describ'd, and the dance was a representation of what was the subject of the Poet's song. *Homer* only says they danc'd divinely, according to the obvious meaning of the words. I fancy *Madam Dacier* would have forborn her observation, if she had reflected upon the nature of the song to which the *Phaeacians* danc'd: It was an intrigue between *Mars* and *Venus*; and they being taken in some very odd postures, she must allow that these dancers represented some very odd gestures, (or movements as she expresses it) if they were now dancing an History, that is acting in their motions what was the subject of the song. But I submit to the judgment of Ladies, and shall only add, that this is an instance how a critical eye can see some things in an author, that were never intended by him; tho' to do her justice, she borrowed the general remark from *Enstathius*.

The words *μαμαρυγὰς ἑρτο ποδῶν* are very expressive, they represent the quick glancings of their feet in the dance, *Motus pedum cornescans*; or

The glancing splendors as their sandals play.

v. 307. ——— The Bard alternate to the strings

The loves of Mars and Cytherea sings.]

The Reader may be pleas'd to look back to the beginning of the book for a general vindication of this story. *Scaliger* in his *Poetics* prefers the song of *Iopas* in *Virgil*, to this of *Demodocus* in *Homer*; *Demodocus Deorum canit faditates, noster Iopas res rege dignas*. *Monsieur Dacier* in his Annotations upon *Aristotle's Poetics* refutes the objection. The song of *Demodocus*, says he, is as well adapted to the inclinations and relish of the *Phaeacians*, as the song of *Iopas* is to Queen *Dido*. It may indeed be question'd whether the subject of *Virgil's* song be well chosen, and whether the deepest points

158 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VIII.

How the stern God enamour'd with her charms
 310 Clasp'd the gay panting Goddess in his arms,
 By bribes seduc'd: and how the Sun, whose eye
 Views the broad heav'ns disclos'd the lawless joy.

Stung

points of Philosophy were entirely proper to be sung to a Queen and her female attendants.

*The various labours of the wandering Moon,
 And whence proceed th' eclipses of the Sun,
 Th' original of men and beasts, and whence
 The rains arise, and fires their warmth dispenſe, &c.*

Dryden.

Nor is *Virgil* more reserv'd than *Homer*: In the fourth *Georgic* he introduces a Nymph, who in the Court of the Goddess *Cyrene* with her Nymphs about her, sings this very song of *Demodocus*.

*To these Clymene the sweet sheft declares
 Of Mars; and Vulcan's unavailing cares;
 And all the rapes of Gods, and every love
 From antient Chaos down to youthful Jove.*

Dryden.

So that if either of the Poets are to be blamed, 'tis certainly *Virgil*: but neither of them, adds that Critic, are culpable: *Virgil* understood what a chaste Queen ought to hear before strangers, and what women might say when alone amongst themselves; thus to the Queen he sings a philosophical song, the intrigues of *Mars* and *Venus* amongst nymphs when they were alone.

Platarch vindicates this story of *Homer*: There is a way of teaching by mute actions, and those very fables that have given most offence, furnish us with useful contemplations: Thus in the story of *Mars* and *Venus*, some have by an unnecessary violence endeavour'd to reduce it into allegory: When *Venus* is in conjunction with the Star call'd *Mars*, they have an adultrous influence, but, time, or the sun, reveals it. But the Poet himself far better explains the meaning of his fable, for he teaches that light musick and wan-

Stung to the soul, indignant thro' the skies
To his black forge vindictive *Vulcan* flies:

315 Arriv'd, his finewy arms incessant place
Th' eternal anvil on the massy base.

A wond'rous Net he labours, to betray
The wanton lovers, as entwin'd they lay,
Indissolubly strong! then instant bears

320 To his immortal dome the finish'd snares.
Above, below, around, with art dispread,
The sure enclosure folds the genial bed;
Whose texture ev'n the search of Gods deceives,
Thin, as the filmy threads the spider weaves.

325 Then as withdrawing from the starry bow'rs,
He feigns a journey to the *Lemnian* shores:
His fav'rite Isle! Observant *Mars* descries
His wish'd recess, and to the Goddess flies;

ton songs debauch the manners, and incline men to an unmanly way of living in luxury and wantonness.

In short, *Virgil* mentions this story, *Ovid* translates it, *Plutarch* commends it, and *Scaliger* censures it. I will add the judgment of a late Writer, Monsieur *Boileau*, concerning *Scaliger*, in his Notes upon *Longinus*. "That proud scholar, says he, intending to erect
"altars to *Virgil*, as he expresses it, speaks of *Homer* too pro-
"phanely; but it is a book which he calls in part *Hypercritical*, to
"shew that he transgressed the bounds of true Criticism: That
"piece was a dishonour to *Scaliger*, and he fell into such gross
"errors, that he drew upon him the ridicule of all men of letters,
"and even of his own son.

He

He glows, he burns: The fair-hair'd Queen of love

- 330 Descends smooth-gliding from the Courts of Jove,
Gay blooming in full charms: her hand he prest
With eager joy, and with a sigh address.

Come, my belov'd! and taste the soft delights:

Come, to repose the genial bed invites:

- 335 Thy absent spouse neglectful of thy charms
Prefers his barb'rous *Sintians* to thy arms!

Then, nothing loth, th' enamour'd fair he led,
And sunk transported on the conscious bed.

Down rush'd the toils, enwrapping as they lay

- 340 The careless lovers in their wanton play:
In vain they strive, th' entangling snares deny
(Inextricably firm) the pow'r to fly:

Warn'd by the God who sheds the golden day,
Stern *Vulcan* homeward treads the starry way:

- 345 Arriv'd, he sees, he grieves, with rage he burns;
Full horribly he roars, his voice all heav'n returns.

v. 336. *Prefers his barb'rous Sintians to thy arms.*] The *Sintians* were the inhabitants of *Lemnos*, by origin *Thracians*: *Homer* calls them barbarous of speech, because their language was a corruption of the *Greek*, *Asiatic*, and *Thracian*. But there is a concealed raillery in the expression, and *Mars* ridicules the ill taste of *Vulcan* for leaving so beautiful a Goddess to visit his rude and barbarous *Sintians*. The Poet calls *Lemnos* the favourite Isle of *Vulcan*; this alludes to the subterraneous fires frequent in that Island, and he is feigned to have his forge there, as the God of fire. This is likewise the reason why he is said to fall into the Island *Lemnos* when *Jupiter* threw him from Heaven. *Dacier*.

O *Jove*, he cry'd, oh all ye pow'rs above,
See the lewd dalliance of the Queen of Love!
Me, awkward me she scorns, and yields her charms

350 To that fair Lecher, the strong God of arms.

If I am lame, that stain my natal hour

By fate impos'd; such me my parent bore:

Why was I born? see how the wanton lies

O fight tormenting to an husband's eyes!

355 But yet I trust, this once ev'n *Mars* would fly

His fair ones arms ——— he thinks her, once, too
nigh.

But there remain, ye guilty, in my pow'r,

'Till *Jove* refunds his shameless daughter's dow'r.

Too

v. 348. *See the lewd dalliance of the Queen of Love.*] The original seems to be corrupted; were it to be translated according to the present editions, it must be, *See the ridiculous deeds of Venus*. I conceive, that few husbands who should take their spouses in such circumstances would have any great appetite to laugh; neither is such an interpretation consonant to the words immediately following, *ἐν ἱερῷ*. It is therefore very probable that the verse was originally

Δεῖθ' ἵνα ἔργ' ἀγλαστοὶ καὶ ἐν ἱερῷ ἴδωσθε.

Come ye Gods, behold the sad and unsufferable deeds of Venus; and this agrees with the tenor of *Vulcan's* behaviour in this comedy, who has not the least disposition to be merry with his brother Deities.

v. 358. *'Till Jove refund his shameless daughter's dow'r.*] I doubt not but this was the usage of antiquity: It has been observed that the bridegroom made presents to the father of the bride, which

Too dear I priz'd a fair enchanting face:

360 Beauty unchaste is beauty in disgrace.

Mean-while the Gods the dome of *Vulcan* throng,

Apollo comes, and *Neptune* comes along,

With these gay *Hermes* trod the starry plain;

But modesty with-held the Goddess-train.

365 All heav'n beholds, imprison'd as they lye,

And unextinguish'd laughter shakes the sky.

which were call'd *ἵστα*; and if she was afterwards false to his bed, this dower was restor'd by the father to the husband. Besides this restitution, there seems a pecuniary mulct to have been paid, as appears evident from what follows.

————— The God of arms,

Must pay the penalty for lawless charms.

Homer in this as in many other places seems to allude to the laws of *Athena*, where death was the punishment of adultery. *Pausanias* relates that *Draco* the *Athenian* lawgiver granted impunity to any person that took revenge upon an adulterer. Such also was the institution of *Solon*; "If any one seize an adulterer, let him use him as he pleases, *ἂν τις μοιχὸν λάβῃ, ὅτι ἂν βέλῃται χρῆσθαι*. And thus *Eratosthenes* answer'd a person who begg'd his life after he had injur'd his bed, *ἐκ ἐγὼ σε ἀποκινῶ, ἀλλ' ὁ τῆς πόλεως νόμος*, "It is not I who slay thee, but the law of thy country." But still it was in the power of the injur'd person to take a pecuniary mulct by way of atonement; for thus the same *Eratosthenes* speak in *Lysias*, *ἠνέσθαι καὶ ἰκέσθαι μὴ αὐτὸν κτείνειν, ἀλλ' ἀργύριον παρασθῆναι*, "he entreated me not to take his life, but exact a sum of money." Nay, such penalties were allow'd by way of commutation for greater crimes than adultery, as in the case of murders: *Iliad* 9.

————— If a brother bleed,

On just atonement, we remit the deed:

A fire the slaughter of his son forgives;

The price of blood discharg'd, the murderer lives.

Then

Then mutual, thus they spoke: Behold on wrong
Swift vengeance waits: and Art subdues the strong!
Dwells there a God on all th' *Olympian* brow

370 More swift than *Mars*, and more than *Vulcan*-flow?
Yet *Vulcan* conquers, and the God of arms
Must pay the penalty for lawless charms.

Thus serious they: but he who gilds the skies,
The gay *Apollo* thus to *Hermes* cries.

375 Wou'dst thou enchain'd like *Mars*, oh *Hermes*, lye
And bear the shame like *Mars*, to share the joy?

O envy'd shame! (the smiling Youth rejoin'd.)
Add thrice the chains, and thrice more firmly bind;
Gaze all ye Gods, and ev'ry Goddess gaze,

380 Yet eager would I bless the sweet disgrace.

Loud laugh the rest, ev'n *Neptune* laughs aloud,
Yet sues importunate to loose the God:

And

v. 367. ——— Behold on wrong
Swift vengeance waits ———]

Plutarch in his dissertation upon reading the Poets, quotes this as an instance of *Homer's* judgment, in closing a ludicrous scene with decency and instruction. He artfully inserts a sentence by which he discovers his own judgment, and lets the reader into the moral of his fables; by this conduct he makes even the representation of evil actions useful, by shewing the shame and detriment they draw upon those who are guilty of them.

v. 382. *Neptune sues to loose the God.*] It may be ask'd why *Neptune* in particular interests himself in the deliverance of *Mars*, rather than the other Gods? *Dacier* confesses she can find no reason for it; but *Enslathins* is of opinion, that *Homer* ascribes it to
that

And free, he cries, oh *Vulcan*! free from shame

Thy captives; I ensure the penal claim.

385 Will *Neptune* (*Vulcan* then) the faithless trust?

He suffers who gives surety for th' unjust:

But say, if that lewd scandal of the sky

To liberty restor'd, perfidious fly,

that God out of decency, and deference to his superior Majesty and Eminence amongst the other Deities: It is suitable to the character of that most ancient, and consequently honourable God, to interrupt such an indecent scene of mirth, which is not so becoming his personage, as those more youthful Deities *Apollo* and *Mercury*. Besides, it agrees well with *Neptune's* gravity to be the first who is mindful of friendship; so that what is here said of *Neptune* is not accidental, but spoken judiciously by the Poet in honour of that Deity.

v. 386. *He suffers who gives surety for th' unjust.*] This verse is very obscure, and made still more obscure by the explanations of Criticks. Some think it implies, that it is wicked to be surety for a wicked person; and therefore *Neptune* should not give his promise for *Mars* thus taken in adultery. Some take it generally; suretyship is detrimental, and it is the lot of unhappy men to be sureties: the words then are to be construd in the following order, *διδας τοι ἑγγυας, καὶ δειλὸν αἰσπὰν ἑγγυατορίας*. *Sponsores sunt infelices, & hominum est infeliciam sponsores dare*. Others understand it very differently, viz. to imply that the sureties of men of inferior condition, should be to men of inferior condition; then the sentence will bear this import: If *Mars*, says *Vulcan*, refuses to discharge the penalty, how shall I compel *Neptune* to pay it, who is so greatly my superior? And therefore adds by way of sentence, that the sponsor ought to be of the same station with the person to whom he becomes surety; or in *Latin* *simplicium hominum, simplices esse debent sponsores*. I have followed *Plutarch*, who in his banquet of the seven wise men, explains it to signify that it is dangerous to be surety for a wicked person, according to the ancient sentence, *ἑγγυα παρὰ δ' αἴρα*. *Loss follows suretyship*. Agreeably to the opinion of a much wiser person, *He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it; and he that hateth suretyship is sure*. *Prov. xi. 15*.

Say

Say wilt thou hear the Mule? He instant cries:

390 The mule I bear, if *Mars* perfidious flies.

To whom appeas'd: No more I urge delays.

When *Neptune* sues, my part is to obey.

Then to the snares his force the God applies:

They burst; and *Mars* to *Thrace* indignant flies:

395 To the soft *Cyprian* shores the Goddess moves,

To visit *Paphos* and her blooming groves,

Where to the pow'r an hundred altars rise,

And breathing odours scent the balmy skies,

Conceal'd she bathes in consecrated bow'rs.

400 The Graces unguents shed, ambrosial show'rs,

Unguents that charm the Gods! she last assumes

Her wond'rous robes; and full the Goddess blooms.

Thus sung the Bard: *Ulysses* hears with joy,

And loud applauses rend the vaulted sky.

405 Then to the sports his sons the King commands,

Each blooming youth before the monarch stands:

v. 394. ——— *Mars to Thrace indignant flies:*

To the soft Cyprian shores the Goddess moves.]

There is a reason for this particularity: The *Thracians* were a warlike people: the Poet therefore sends the God of War thither: and the people of *Cyprus* being effeminate, and addicted to love and pleasures, he feigns the recess of the Goddess of Love to have been in that Island. It is further observable, that he barely mentions the retreat of *Mars*, but dwells more largely upon the story of *Venus*. The reason is, the *Phæacians* had no delight in the God of War, but the soft description of *Venus* better suited with their inclinations. *Enslathius.*

In

In dance unmatch'd! a wond'rous ball is brought,
(The work of *Polybus*, divinely wrought)

This youth with strength enormous bids it fly,
410 And bending backward whirls it to the sky;
His brother springing with an active bound
At distance intercepts it from the ground:
The ball dismiss'd, in dance they skim the strand,
Turn and return, and scarce imprint the sand.

415 Th' assembly gazes with astonish'd eyes,
And sends in shouts applauses to the skies.

Then thus *Ulysses*; Happy King, whose name
The brightest shines in all the rolls of fame:
In subjects happy! with surprize I gaze:

420 Thy praise was just; their skill transcends thy praise.
Pleas'd

v. 410. *And bending backward whirls it to the sky.*] This is a literal translation of ἰδρωδὶς ὀρίσω; and it gives us a lively image of a person in the act of throwing towards the skies. *Enstathius* is most learnedly trifling about this exercise of the ball, which was called οὐρανία, or *aereal*; it was a kind of a dance, and while they sprung from the ground to catch the ball, they play'd with their feet in the air after the manner of dancers. He reckons up several other exercises at the ball, ἀπὸρραγίς, παρινδα, ἐπισκυρος, and θερμαῖστρος; and explains them all largely. *Homer* seems to oppose this *aereal* dance to the common one, ποτὶ χθονί, or *on the ground*, which appears to be added to make an evident distinction between the sports; otherwise it is unnecessary; and to dance upon the ground is imply'd in ἐπιχθονί, for how should a dance be perform'd but upon the Ground?

v. 420. *Thy praise was just* —] The original says, You promis'd that your subjects were excellent dancers ἀμείνωντας; that is, *threaten'd*:

Book VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 167

Pleas'd with his people's fame the Monarch hears,
And thus benevolent accosts the Peers.

Since Wisdom's sacred guidance he pursues,
Give to the stranger-guest a stranger's dues:

425 Twelve Princes in our realm dominion share,
O'er whom supreme, imperial pow'r I bear:
Bring gold, a pledge of love, a talent bring,
A vest, a robe, and imitate your King:

Be swift to give; that he this night may share
430 The social feast of joy, with joy sincere.
And thou, *Euryalus*, redeem thy wrong:

A gen'rous heart repairs a slanderous tongue.

Th' assenting Peers, obedient to the King,
In haste their heralds send the gifts to bring.

435 Then thus *Euryalus*: O Prince, whose sway
Rules this blest realm, repentant I obey!
Be his this sword, whose blade of brass displays
A ruddy gleam; whose hilt, a silver blaze;

threaten'd: *Mitans* is used in the same sense by the *Latins*, as *Dacier* observes; thus *Horace*,

Multa & præclara minantem.

Enstathius remarks, that the address of *Ulysses* is very artful, he calls it a seasonable flattery: In reality to excel in dancing, is but to excel in trifles, but in the opinion of *Alcinous* it was a most noble qualification: *Ulysses* therefore pleases his vanity by adapting his praise to his notions; and that which would have been an affront in some nations, is esteem'd as the highest compliment by *Alcinous*.

Whose

Whose ivory sheath inwrought with curious pride,

440 Adds graceful terror to the wearer's side.

He said, and to his hand the sword consign'd;
And if, he cry'd, my words affect thy mind,
Far from thy mind those words, ye whirlwinds bear,
And scatter them, ye storms, in empty air!

445 Crown, oh ye heav'ns, with joy his peaceful hours,
And grant him to his spouse and native shores!

And blest be thou, my friend, *Ulysses* cries,
Crown him with ev'ry joy, ye fav'ring skies;
To thy calm hours continu'd peace afford,

450 And never, never may'st thou want this sword!

He said, and o'er his shoulder flung the blade.
Now o'er the earth ascends the evening shade:
The precious gifts th' illustrious heralds bear,
And to the court th'embodiy'd Peers repair.

v. 450. *And never, never may'st thou want this sword.*] It can scarce be imagin'd how greatly this beautiful passage is misrepresented by *Enstathius*. He would have it to imply, *May I never want this sword*, taking *τοί* adverbially: The presents of enemies were reckon'd fatal, *Ulysses* therefore to avert the omen, prays that he may never have occasion to have recourse to this sword of *Enryalus*, but keep it amongst his treasures as a testimony of this reconciliation. This appears to be a very forc'd interpretation, and disagreeable to the general import of the rest of the sentence; he addresses to *Enryalus*, to whom then can this compliment be naturally paid but to *Enryalus*? *Thou hast given me a sword*, says he, *may thy days be so peaceable as never to want it!* This is an instance of the polite address, and the forgiving temper, of *Ulysses*.

Before

455 Before the Queen *Alcinous'* sons unfold
The vests, the robes, and heaps of shining gold;
Then to the radiant thrones they move in state:
Aloft, the King in pomp Imperial sate.

Thence to the Queen. O partner of our reign,
460 O sole belov'd! command thy menial train
A polish'd chest and stately robes to bear,
And healing waters for the bath prepare:
That bath'd, our guest may bid his sorrows cease,
Hear the sweet song, and taste the feast in peace.

465 A bowl that flames with gold, of wond'rous frame,
Our self we give, memorial of our name:
To raise in offerings to almighty *Jove*,
And every God that treads the courts above.

Instant the Queen, observant of the King,
470 Commands her train a spacious vase to bring.
The spacious vase with ample streams suffice,
Heap high the wood, and bid the flames arise.
The flames climb round it with a fierce embrace,
The fuming waters bubble o'er the blaze.

475 Her self the chest prepares: in order roll'd
The robes, the vests are rang'd, and heaps of gold:
And adding a rich dress inwrought with art,
A gift expressive of her bounteous heart,

Thus spoke to *Ithacus*: To guard with bands

480 Insolvable these gifts, thy care demands:

Left, in thy slumbers on the watry main,

The hand of Rapine make our bounty vain.

Then bending with full force, around he roll'd

A labyrinth of bands in fold on fold,

485 Clos'd with *Circæan* art. A train attends

Around the bath: the bath the King ascends:

(Untasted joy, since that disastrous hour,

He fail'd ill-fated from *Calypso's* bow'r)

Where, happy as the Gods that range the sky,

490 He feasted ev'ry sense, with ev'ry joy.

v. 485. *Clos'd with Circæan art*——] Such passages as these have more of nature than art, and are too narrative, and different from modern ways of speaking, to be capable of much ornament in Poetry. *Enstathius* observes that keys were not in use in these ages, but were afterwards invented by the *Lacedæmonians*; but they used to bind their carriages with intricate knots: Thus the *Gordian* knot was famous in antiquity. And this knot of *Ulysses* became a proverb, to express any insolvable difficulty, *ὁ τὸ ἀδυσκότως διαπλεῖς*: This is the reason why he is said to have learned it from *Circé*; it was of great esteem amongst the Ancients, and not being capable to be untied by human art, the invention of it is ascribed, not to a man, but to a Goddess.

A Poet would now appear ridiculous if he should introduce a Goddess only to teach his Heroe such an art, as to tie a knot with intricacy: but we must not judge of what has been, from what now is; customs and arts are never at a stay, and consequently the ideas of customs and arts are as changeable as those arts and customs: This knot in all probability was in as high estimation formerly, as the finest water-work or machines are at this day; and were a person fam'd for an uncommon skill in such works, it would be no absurdity in the language of poetry, to ascribe his knowledge in them to the assistance of a Deity.

He

He bathes: the damsels with officious toil,
Shed sweets, shed unguents, in a show'r of oil:
Then o'er his limbs a gorgeous robe he spreads,
And to the feast magnificently treads.

495 Full where the dome its shining valves expands,
Nausicaa blooming as a Goddess stands,
With wond'ring eyes the heroe she survey'd,
And graceful thus began the royal maid.

Hail god-like stranger! and when heav'n restores
500 To thy fond wish thy long-expected shores,
This ever grateful in remembrance bear,
To me thou ow'st, to me, the vital air.

O royal maid, *Ulysses* strait returns,
Whose worth the splendors of thy race adorns,
505 So may dread *Jove* (whose arm in vengeance forms
The writen bolt, and blackens heav'n with storms,)
Restore me safe, thro' weary wand'rings toft,
To my dear country's ever-pleasing coast,
As while the spirit in this bosom glows,
510 To thee, my Goddess, I address my vows ;

My

v. 510. *To thee, my Goddess, I address my vows.*] This may seem an extravagant compliment, especially in the mouth of the wise *Ulysses*, and rather prophane than polite. *Dacier* commends it as the highest piece of address and gallantry; but perhaps it may want explication to reconcile it to decency. *Ulysses* only speaks
I 2 com.

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My life, thy gift I boast! He said, and fate
Fast by *Alcinous* on a throne of state.

Now each partakes the feast, the wine prepares,
Portions the food, and each his portion shares.

§15 The Bard an herald guides: the gazing throng
Pay low obeysance as he moves along:
Beneath a sculptur'd arch he sits enthron'd,
The Peers encircling from an awful round.

Then from the chine, *Ulysses* carves with art

§20 Delicious food, an honorary part;

This, let the Master of the Lyre receive,

A pledge of love! 'tis all a wretch can give.

comparatively, and with relation to that one action of her saving his life: "As therefore, says he, I owe my thanks to the Heavens for giving me life originally, so I ought to pay my thanks to thee for preserving it; thou hast been to me as a Deity. To preserve a life, is in one sense to give it." If this appears not to soften the expression sufficiently, it may be ascrib'd to an overflow of gratitude in the generous disposition of *Ulysses*; he is so touch'd with the memory of her benevolence and protection, that his soul labours for an expression great enough to represent it, and no wonder if in this struggle of thought, his words fly out into an excessive but laudable boldness.

v. 519. ——— From the chine *Ulysses* carves with art.] Were this literally to be translated, it would be, that *Ulysses* cut a piece from the chine of the white-tooth'd boar, round which there was much fat. This looks like Burlesque to a person unacquainted with the usages of Antiquity: But it was the highest honour that could be paid to *Demodocus*. The greatest Heroes in the *Iliad* are thus rewarded after victory, and it was esteem'd an equivalent for all dangers. So that what *Ulysses* here offers to the Poet, is offer'd out of a particular regard and honour to his Poetry.

Lives

Lives there a man beneath the spacious skies,
Who sacred honours to the Bard denies?

525 The Muse the Bard inspires, exalts his mind;
The Muse indulgent loves th' harmonious kind:
The herald to his hand the charge conveys,
Not fond of flattery, nor unpleas'd with praise.

When now the rage of hunger was allay'd,

530 Thus to the Lyrist wife *Ulysses* said.
O more than man! thy soul the Muse inspires,
Or *Phœbus* animates with all his fires:
For who by *Phœbus* uninform'd, could know
The woe of Greece, and sing so well the woe?

v. 531. ——— *Thy soul the Muse inspires,*

Or Phœbus animates with all his fires.]

Ulysses here ascribes the songs of *Demodocus* to immediate inspiration; and *Apollo* is made the patron of the Poets, as *Enstathius* observes; because he is the God of Prophecy. He adds, that *Homer* here again represents himself in the person of *Demodocus*: it is he who wrote the war of *Troy* with as much faithfulness, as if he had been present at it; it is he who had little or no assistance from former relations of that story, and consequently receives it from *Apollo* and the Muses. This is a secret but artful insinuation that we are not to look upon the *Iliad* as all fiction and fable, but in general as a real history, related with as much certainty as if the Poet had been present at those memorable actions.

Plutarch in his chapter of reading Poems admires the conduct of *Homer*, with relation to *Ulysses*: He diverts *Demodocus* from idle fables, and gives him a noble theme, the destruction of *Troy*. Such subjects suit well with the sage character of *Ulysses*. It is for the same reason that he here passes over in silence the amour of *Mars* and *Venus*, and commends the song at the beginning of this book, concerning the contention of the worthies before *Troy*: An instruction, what songs a wise man ought to hear, and that Poets should recite nothing but what may be heard by a wise man.

- 535 Just to the tale, as present at the fray,
 Or taught the labours of the dreadful day:
 The song recalls past horrors to my eyes,
 And bids proud *Ilion* from her ashes rise.
 Once more harmonious strike the sounding string,
 540 Th' *Epean* fabric, fram'd by *Pallas*, sing:
 How stern *Ulysses*, furious to destroy,
 With latent heroes sack'd imperial *Troy*.
 If faithful thou record the tale of fame,
 The God himself inspires thy breast with flame:
 545 And mine shall be the task, henceforth to raise
 In ev'ry land, thy monument of praise.
 Full of the God he rais'd his lofty strain,
 How the *Greeks* rush'd tumultuous to the main;
 How blazing tents illumin'd half the skies,
 550 While from the shores the winged navy flies:
 How ev'n in *Ilion's* walls, in deathful bands,
 Came the stern *Greeks* by *Troy's* assisting hands:
 All *Troy* up-heav'd the steed; of diff'ring mind,
 Various the *Trojans* counsell'd; part consign'd

The

v. 554. *Various the Trojans counsell'd*——] It is observable
 that the Poet gives us only the heads of this song, and though he
 had an opportunity to expatiate and introduce a variety of noble
 Images, by painting the fall of *Troy*, yet this being foreign to his
 story, he judiciously restrains his fancy, and passes on to the more
 immedi-

- 555 The monster to the sword, part sentence gave
 To plunge it headlong in the whelming wave;
 Th' unwise award to lodge it in the tow'rs,
 An off'ring sacred to th' immortal pow'rs:
 Th' unwise prevail, they lodge it in the walls,
 560 And by the Gods decree proud *Ilion* falls;
 Destruction enters in the treach'rous wood,
 And vengeful slaughter, fierce for human blood.

immediate actions of the *Odyssey*. *Virgil*, lib. 2. of his *Æneis*, has translated these verses,

*Scinditur incertum studia in contraria vultus,
 At Capys, & quorum melior sententia menti,
 Aut Pelago Danaum insidias inspiclaque dona
 Precipitare jubent, subjectisque intrere flammis:
 Aut terebrare cavas uteri & tentare latebras.*

Scaliger prefers these before those of *Homer*, and says that *Homer* trifles in describing so particularly the divisions of the *Trojan* councils: That *Virgil* chuses to burn the horse, rather than describe it as thrown from the rocks: For how should the *Trojans* raise it thither? Such objections are scarce worthy of a serious answer, for it is no difficulty to imagine that the same men who heaved this machine into *Troy*, should be able to raise it upon a rock: And as for the former objection, *Virgil* recites almost the same divisions in council as *Homer*, nay borrows them, with little variation.

Aristotle observes the great art of *Homer*, in naturally bringing about the discovery of *Ulysses* to *Alcinous* by this song. He calls this a Remembrance, that is, when a present object stirs up a past image in the memory, as a picture recalls the figure of an absent friend: thus *Ulysses* hearing *Demodocus* sing to the harp his former hardships, breaks out into tears, and these tears bring about his discovery.

He sung the *Greeks* stern-issuing from the steed,
How *Ilium* burns, how all her fathers bleed :

565 How to thy dome, *Deiphobus* ! ascends
The *Spartan* King ; how *Ithacus* attends,
(Horrid as *Mars*) and how with dire alarms
He fights, subdues : for *Pallas* strings his arms.

Thus while he sung, *Ulysses*' griefs renew.

570 Tears bathe his cheeks, and tears the ground bedew :
As some fond matron views in mortal fight
Her husband falling in his country's right :
Frantic thro' clashing swords she runs, she flies,
As ghastly pale he groans, and faints, and dies ;

v. 571. *As some fond matron* ———] This is undoubtedly a very moving and beautiful comparison ; but it may be ask'd if it be proper to compare so great a Heroe as *Ulysses* to a woman, the weakness of whose sex justifies her tears ? Besides she appears to have a sufficient cause for her sorrows, as being under the greatest calamities, but why should *Ulysses* weep ? Nothing but his valour and success is recorded, and why should this be an occasion of sorrow ? *Enstathius* replies, that they who think that *Ulysses* is compared to the matron, mistake the point of the comparison : Whereas the tears alone of *Ulysses* are intended to be compared to the tears of the matron. It is the sorrow of the two persons, not the persons themselves, that is represented in the comparison. But there appears no sufficient cause for the tears of *Ulysses* ; this objection would not have been made, if the subject of the song had been consider'd ; it sets before his eyes all the calamities of a long war, all the scenes of slaughter of friends and enemies that he had beheld in it : It is also to be remember'd, that we have only the abridgment of the song, and yet we see spectacles of horror, blood, and commiseration. Tears discover a tender, not an abject spirit. *Achilles* is not less a Heroe for weeping over the ashes of *Patroclus*, nor *Ulysses* for lamenting the calamities and deaths of thousands of his friends.

Close

575 Close to his breast she grovels on the ground,
And bathes with floods of tears the gaping wounds;
She cries, she shrieks: the fierce insulting foe
Relentless mocks her violence of woe,

To chains condemn'd as wildly she deplores,
580 A widow, and a slave, on foreign shores!

So from the sluices of *Ulysses'* eyes
Fast fell the tears, and sighs succeeded sighs:
Conceal'd he griev'd: the King observ'd alone
The silent tear, and heard the secret groan;

585 Then to the Bard aloud: O cease to sing,
Dumb be thy voice, and mute the tuneful string:
To ev'ry note his tears responsive flow,
And his great heart heaves with tumultuous woe;
Thy lay too deeply moves: then cease the lay,

590 And o'er the banquet every heart be gay:
This social right demands: for him the sails
Floating in air, invite th' impelling gales:
His are the gifts of love: The wise and good
Receive the stranger as a brother's blood.

595 But, friend, discover faithful what I crave,
Artful concealment ill becomes the brave:
Say what thy birth, and what the name you bore,
Impos'd by parents in the natal hour?

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For from the natal hour distinctive names,

600 (One common right, the great and lowly claims:)

Say from what city, from what regions tost,

And what inhabitants those regions boast?

So shalt thou instant reach the realm assign'd,

In wond'rous ships self-mov'd, instinct with mind;

605 No helm secures their course, no pilot guides,

Like man intelligent, they plow the tides,

Conscious of every coast, and every bay,

That lies beneath the sun's all-seeing ray;

v. 604. *In wond'rous ships self-mov'd, instinct with mind.*] There is not a passage that more outrages all the rules of credibility than the description of these ships of *Alcinous*. The Poet inserts these wonders only to shew the great dexterity of the *Phaetians* in navigation; and indeed it was necessary to be very full in the description of their skill, who were to convey *Ulysses* home in despite of the very God of the Ocean. It is for the same reason that they are describ'd as sailing almost invisibly, to escape the notice of that God. Antiquity animated every thing in Poetry; thus *Argo* is said to have had a mast made of *Dodonean* oak, indued with the faculty of speech. But this is defending one absurdity, by instancing in a fable equally absurd; all that can be said in defence of it is, that such extravagant fables were believ'd, at least by the vulgar, in former ages; and consequently might be introduced without blame in Poetry; if so, by whom could a boast of this nature be better made, than by a vain *Phaetian*? Besides, these extravagancies let *Ulysses* into the humour of the *Phaetians*, and in the following books he adapts his story to it, and returns fable for fable. It must likewise certainly be a great encouragement to *Ulysses* to find himself in such hands as could so easily restore him to his country; for it was natural to conclude, that though *Alcinous* was guilty of great amplification, yet that his subjects were very expert navigators.

The³

Book VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 179

Tho' clouds and darkness veil th' encumber'd sky,
 610 Fearless thro' darkness and thro' clouds they fly:
 Tho' tempests rage, tho' rolls the swelling main,
 The seas may roll, the tempests rage in vain,
 Ev'n the stern God that o'er the waves presides,
 Safe as they pass, and safe repass the tides,
 615 With fury burns; while careless they convey
 Promiscuous every guest to every bay.
 These ears have heard my royal fire disclose
 A dreadful story big with future woes,
 How Neptune rag'd, and how by his command
 620 Firm rooted in the surge a ship should stand

A mo-

v. 619.

—how by his command

Firm-rooted in the surge a ship should stand.]

The Antients, as *Eusebius* observes, mark these verses with an Obelisk and Asterism. The Obelisk shew'd that they judg'd what relates to the oracle was mis-plac'd, the Asterism denoted that they thought the verses very beautiful. For they thought it not probable that *Alcinous* would have call'd to memory this prediction and the menace of *Neptune*, and yet persisted to conduct to his own country the enemy of that Deity: Whereas if this oracle be supposed to be forgotten by *Alcinous*, (as it will, if these verses be taken away) then there will be an appearance of truth, that he who was a friend to all strangers, should be persuaded to land so great and worthy a Heroe as *Ulysses* in his own dominions, and therefore they reject them to the 13th of the *Odyssey*. But as *Eusebius* observes, *Alcinous* immediately subjoins,

*But this the Gods may frustrate or fulfill,
 As suits the purpose of th' eternal will.*

And therefore the verses may be very proper in this book, for *Alcinous* believes that the Gods might be prevailed upon not to

A monument of wrath : how mound on mound
Should bury these proud tow'rs beneath the ground.

fulfill this denunciation. It has been likewise remark'd that the conduct of *Alcinous* is very justifiable: The *Phæacians* had been warn'd by an oracle, that an evil threaten'd them for the care they should shew to a stranger: yet they forbear not to perform an act of piety to *Ulysses*, being persuaded that men ought to do their duty, and trust the issue to the goodness of the Gods. This will seem to be more probable, if we remember *Alcinous* is ignorant that *Ulysses* is the person intended by the prediction, so that he is not guilty of a voluntary opposition to the Gods, but really acts with piety in assisting his guest, and only complies with the common laws of hospitality.

It is but a conjecture, yet it is not without probability, that there was a rock which look'd like a vessel, in the entrance of the haven of the *Phæacians*: the fable may be built upon this foundation, and because it was environ'd by the ocean, the transformation might be ascrib'd to the God of it.

V. 621.

How mound on mound

Should bury these proud tow'rs beneath the ground.]

The Greek word is ἀμφοτέρωθεν, which does not necessarily imply that the city should be buried actually, but that a mountain should surround it, or cover it round; and in the 13th book we find that when the ship was transform'd into a rock, the city continues out of danger. *Eustathius* is fully of opinion, that the city was threaten'd to be overwhelm'd by a mountain; the Poet, says he, invents this fiction to prevent posterity from searching after this Isle of the *Phæacians*, and to preserve his story from detection of falsification; after the same manner as he introduces *Nepseus* and the rivers of *Troy*, bearing away the wall which the *Greeks* had rais'd as a fortification before their navy. But *Dacier* in the omissions which he inserts at the end of the second volume of his *Odyssey*, is of a contrary opinion, for the mountain is not said to cover the city, but to threaten to cover it: as appears from the 13th book of the *Odyssey*, where *Alcinous* commands a sacrifice to the Gods to avert the execution of this denunciation.

But the difference in reality is small, the city is equally threaten'd to be buried as the vessel to be transform'd; and therefore *Alcinous* might pronounce the same fate to both, since both were threaten'd equally by the prediction; it was indeed impossible for him to speak after any other manner, for he only repeats the words of the oracle, and cannot foresee that the sacrifice of the *Phæacians* would appease the anger of *Nepseus*.

But

But this the Gods may frustrate or fulfill,
As suits the purpose of th' eternal will.

- 625 But say thro' what waste regions hast thou stray'd,
What customs noted, and what coasts survey'd?
Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms?
Say why the fate of *Troy* awak'd thy cares,
630 Why heav'd thy bosom, and why flow'd thy tears?
Just are the ways of heav'n: From heav'n proceed
The woes of man; heav'n doom'd the *Greeks* to bleed,
A theme of future song! Say then if slain
Some dear-lov'd brother press'd the *Phrygian* plain?
635 Or bled some friend? who bore a brother's part,
And claim'd by merit, not by blood, the heart.

v. 635. *Or bled some friend? who bore a brother's part,
And claim'd by merit, not by blood, the heart.*]

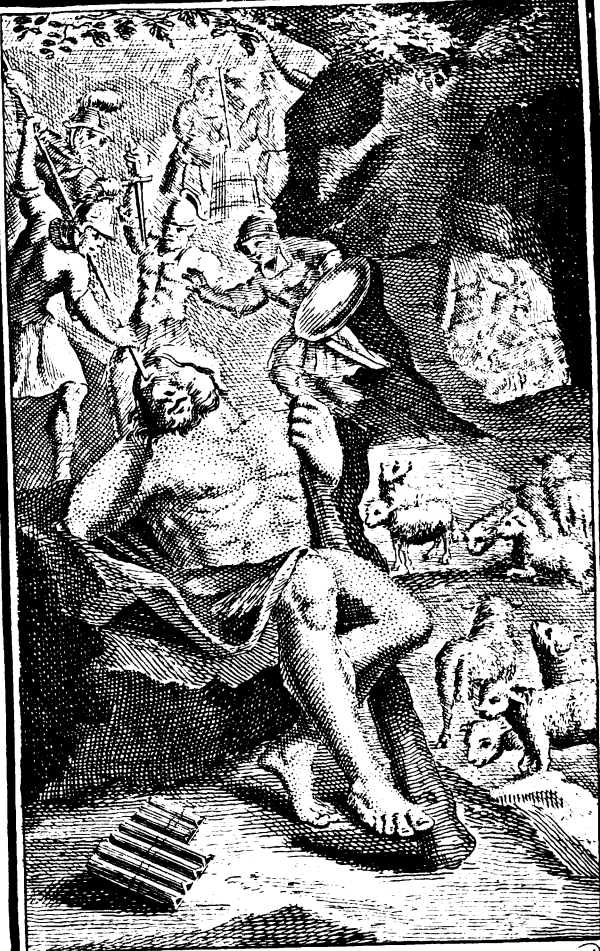
This excellent sentence of *Homer* at once guides us in the choice, and instructs us in the regard, that is to be paid to the person of a Friend. If it be lawful to judge of a man from his writings, *Homer* had a soul susceptible of real friendship, and was a lover of sincerity. It would be endless to take notice of every casual instruction inserted in the *Odyssey*; but such sentences shew *Homer* to have been a man of an amiable character, as well as excellent in Poetry: The great abhorrence he had of Lies cannot be more strongly express'd than in those two passages in the ninth *Iliad*, and in the 14th *Odyssey*: In the first of which he makes the man of the greatest soul, *Achilles*, bear testimony to his aversion of them; and in the latter declares, that "the poorest man, tho' compell'd by the utmost necessity, ought not to stoop to such a practice". In this place he shews

shews that worth creates a kind of relation, and that we are to look upon a worthy friend, as a brother.

This book takes up the whole thirty third day, and part of the evening: for the council opens in the morning, and at sun setting the *Phæacians* return to the Palace from the games; after which *Ulysses* bathes and sups, and spends some time of the evening in discoursing, and hearing the songs of *Demodocus*. Then *Alcinous* requests him to relate his own story, which he begins in the next book, and continues it thro' the four subsequent books of the *Odyssey*.



THE



*Ulysses and his Companions are revenge
of the Cyclops.*

THE
NINTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.



The ARGUMENT.

The adventures of the Cicons, Lotophagi, and Cyclops.

Ulysses begins the relation of his adventures; how after the destruction of Troy, he made an incursion on the Cicons, by whom they were repuls'd; and meeting with a storm, were driven to the coast of the Lotophagi. From thence they sail'd to the land of the Cyclops, whose manners and situation are particularly characteris'd. The Giant Polyphemus and his cave describ'd; the usage Ulysses and his companions met there; and lastly, the method and artifice by which he escaped.

THE

T H E
N I N T H B O O K
O F T H E
O D Y S S E Y.

THEN thus *Ulysses*. Thou, whom first in sway
As first in virtue, these thy realms obey!

How

As we are now come to the Episodical part of the *Odyssey*, it may be thought necessary to speak something of the nature of Episodes.

As the action of the Epic is always one, entire, and great Action; so the most trivial Episodes must be so interwoven with it, as to be necessary parts, or convenient, as Mr. *Dryden* observes, to carry on the main design; either so necessary, as without them the Poem must be imperfect, or so convenient, that no others can be imagin'd more suitable to the place in which they stand: There is nothing to be left void in a firm building, even the cavities ought not to be fill'd up with rubbish destructive to the strength of it, but with materials of the same kind, tho' of less pieces, and fitted to the main fabric,

Arise-

Aristotle tells us, that what is comprehended in the first platform of the fable is proper, the rest is Episode: Let us examine the *Odyssey* by this rule: The groundwork of the Poem is, a Prince absent from his country several years, *Neptune* hinders his return, yet at last he breaks thro' all obstacles, and returns, where he finds great disorders, the Authors of which he punishes, and restores peace to his kingdoms. This is all that is essential to the model; this the Poet is not at liberty to change; this is so necessary, that any alteration destroys the design, spoils the fable, and makes another Poem of it. But Episodes are changeable; for instance, tho' it was necessary that *Ulysses* being absent should spend several years with foreign Princes, yet it was not necessary that one of these Princes should be *Antiphates*, another *Akinous*, or that *Circe* or *Calypso* should be the persons who entertain'd him: It was in the Poet's choice to have chang'd these persons and states, without changing his design or fable. Thus tho' these adventures or Episodes become parts of the subject after they are chosen, yet they are not originally essential to the subject. But in what sense then are they necessary? The reply is, Since the absence of *Ulysses* was absolutely necessary, it follows that not being at home, he must be in some other country; and therefore tho' the Poet was at liberty to make use of none of these particular adventures, yet it was not in his choice to make use of none at all; if these had been omitted, he must have substituted others, or else he would have omitted part of the matter contain'd in his model, viz. the adventures of a person long absent from his country; and the Poem would have been defective. So that Episodes are not actions, but parts of an action. It is in Poetry, as *Aristotle* observes, as in Painting; a Painter puts many actions into one piece, but they all conspire to form one entire and perfect Action: A Poet likewise uses many Episodes, but all those Episodes taken separately finish nothing, they are but imperfect members, which all together make one and the same action, like the parts of a human body, they all conspire to constitute the whole man.

In a word, the Episodes of *Homer* are compleat Episodes; they are proper to the subject, because they are drawn from the ground of the fable; they are so join'd to the principal action, that one is the necessary consequence of the other, either truly or probably: and lastly, they are imperfect members which do not make a compleat and finish'd body; for an Episode that makes a compleat action, cannot be part of a principal action, as is essential to all Episodes.

An Episode may then be defin'd, "a necessary part of an action, extended by probable circumstances." They are part of an action, for they are not added to the principal action, but only dilate and amplify that principal action: Thus the Poet to shew
the

Book IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 187

How sweet the products of a peaceful reign?

The heav'n-taught Poet, and enchanting strain:

The

the sufferings of *Ulysses* brings in the several Episodes of *Polyphemus*, *Scylla*, the *Sirens*, &c. But why should the words "extended by probable circumstances" enter the definition? Because the sufferings of *Ulysses* are propos'd in the model of the Fable in general only, but by relating the circumstances, the manner how he is discover'd, and this connects it with the principal action, and shews very evidently the necessary relation the Episode bears to the main design of the *Odyssey*. What I have said I hope plainly discovers the difference between the Episodic and Principal action, as well as the nature of Episodes. See *Boson* more largely upon this subject.

v. 3. *How sweet the products of a peaceful reign? &c.*] This passage has given great joy to the Critics, as it has afforded them the ill-natur'd pleasure of railing, and the satisfaction of believing they have found a fault in a good Writer. It is fitter, say they, for the mouth of *Epicurus* than for the sage *Ulysses*, to extol the pleasures of feasting and drinking in this manner: He whom the Poet proposes as the standard of human Wisdom, says *Rapine*, suffers himself to be made drunk by the *Pheacians*. But it may rather be imagin'd, that the Critic was not very sober when he made the reflection; for there is not the least appearance of a reason for that imputation. *Plato* indeed in his third book *de Repub.* writes, that what *Ulysses* here speaks is no very proper example of temperance: but every body knows that *Plato*, with respect to *Homer*, wrote with great partiality. *Athenens* in his twelfth book gives us the following interpretation. *Ulysses* accommodates his discourse to the present occasion; he in appearance approves of the voluptuous lives of the *Pheacians*, and having heard *Alcinous* before say, that feasting and singing, &c. was their supreme delight; he by a seasonable flattery seems to comply with their inclinations: it being the most proper method to attain his desires of being convey'd to his own country. He compares *Ulysses* to the *Polyphus*, which is fabled to assume the colour of every rock to which he approaches: Thus *Sophocles*,

Νῆς πρὸς ἀνδρὶ σῶμα Πελύπῃ, ἔπωε
Πέρτερά τ' ἀπείσθαι γῆσι φρονήματος.

That is "In your accesses to mankind observe the *Polyphus*, and
"adapt your self to the humour of the person to whom you ap-
"ply.

5 The well-fill'd palace, the perpetual feast,
A land rejoicing, and a people blest.

"ply. *Enstathius* observes that this passage has been condemn'd, but he defends it after the very same way with *Athenens*.

It is not impossible but that there may be some compliance with the nature and manners of the *Phaicians*, especially because *Ulysses* is always describ'd as an artful man, not without some mixture of dissimulation: But it is no difficult matter to take the passage literally, and yet give it an irreproachable sense. *Ulysses* had gone thro' innumerable calamities, he had liv'd to see a great part of *Europe* and *Asia* laid desolate by a bloody war; and after so many troubles, he arrives among a nation that was unacquainted with all the miseries of war, where all the people were happy, and pass'd their lives in ease and pleasures: this calm life fills him with admiration, and he artfully praises what he found praise-worthy in it; namely, the entertainments and music, and passes over the gallantries of the people, as *Dacier* observes, without any mention. *Maximus Tyrinus* fully vindicates *Homer*. It is my opinion, says that Author, that the Poet, by representing these guests in the midst of their entertainment, delighted with the song and music, intended to recommend a more noble pleasure than eating or drinking, such a pleasure as a wise man may imitate, by approving the better part, and rejecting the worse, and chusing to please the ear rather than the belly. 12 *Disserts*.

If we understand the passage otherwise, the meaning may be this. I am persuaded, says *Ulysses*, that the most agreeable end which a King can propose, is to see a whole nation in universal joy, when music and feasting are in every house, when plenty is on every table, and wines to entertain every guest; This to me appears a state of the greatest felicity.

In this sense *Ulysses* pays *Alcinous* a very agreeable compliment; as it is certainly the most glorious aim of a King to make his subjects happy, and diffuse an universal joy thro' his dominions: He must be a rigid Censor indeed who blames such pleasures as these, which have nothing contrary in them to Virtue and strict Morality; especially as they here bear a beautiful opposition to all the horrors which *Ulysses* had seen in the wars of *Troy*, and shew *Phaacia* as happy as *Troy* was miserable. I will only add, that this agrees with the oriental way of speaking; and in the Poetical parts of the Scriptures, the voice of melody, feasting, and dancing, are used to express the happiness of a nation.

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How goodly seems it, ever to employ

Man's social days in union, and in joy?

The plenteous board high-heap'd with cates divine,

10 And o'er the foaming bowl the laughing wine.

Amid these joys, why seeks thy mind to know

Th' unhappy series of a wand'rer's woe?

Remembrance sad, whose image to review

Alas! must open all my wounds anew.

15 And oh, what first, what last shall I relate,

Of woes unnumber'd sent by Heav'n and Fate?

Know first the man (tho' now a wretch distressed)

Who hopes thee, Monarch! for his future guest.

Behold *Ulysses*! no ignoble name,

20 Earth sounds my wisdom, and high heav'n my fame.

My

v. 19. *Behold Ulysses!* —] The Poet begins with declaring the name of *Ulysses*: the *Phæacians* had already been acquainted with it by the song of *Demodocus*, and therefore it could not fail of raising the utmost attention and curiosity (as *Eustathius* observes) of the whole assembly, to hear the story of so great an Heroe. Perhaps it may be thought that *Ulysses* is ostentatious, and speaks of himself too favourably; but the necessity of it will appear, if we consider that *Ulysses* had nothing but his personal qualifications to engage the *Phæacians* in his favour. It was therefore requisite to make those qualifications known, and this was not possible to be done but by his own relation, he being a stranger among strangers. Besides, he speaks before a vain-glorious people, who thought even boasting no fault. It may be question'd whether *Virgil* be so happy in these respects, when he puts almost the same words into the mouth of *Aeneas*.

Sum

190 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book IX.

My native soil is *Ithaca* the fair,
Where high *Neritus* waves his woods in air:—

Dul-

*Sum pius Æneas, raptos qui ex hoste penates
Classe veho tecum, famâ super æthera notus.*

For his boast contributes nothing to the re-establishment of his affairs, for he speaks to the Goddess's *Venus*. Yet *Scaliger* infinitely prefers *Virgil* before *Homer*, tho' there be no other difference in the words, than *raptos qui ex hoste penates*, instead of

—————"Ὅς πάσι δόλοισιν
Ἀγρωῶποισι μίλω.————

He questions whether Subtilties, or δόλω, ever rais'd any person's glory to the Heavens; whereas that is the reward of piety. But the word is to be understood to imply Wisdom, and all the stratagems of war, &c. according to the first verse of the *Odyssey*,

The Man for Wisdom's various arts renown'd.

He is not less severe upon the verses immediately preceding,

Σοὶ δ' ἑμὰ κήδ' αὖ θυμὸς ἐπιτρέπεται γονόντα, &c.

— which lines are undoubtedly very beautiful, and admirably express the number of the sufferings of *Ulysses*; the multitude of them is so great, that they almost confound him; and he seems at a loss where to begin, how to proceed, or where to end; and they agree very well with the proposition in the opening of the *Odyssey*, which was to relate the sufferings of a brave man. The verses which *Scaliger* quotes are

*Infandum regina jubes renovare dolorem;
Trojanas ut opes, &c.*

Omnia sanè non sine sua divinitate, and he concludes, that *Virgil* has not so much imitated *Homer*, as taught us how *Homer* ought to have wrote.

v. 21. — [*Ithaca the fair, Where high Neritus, &c.*] *Eustathius* gives various interpretations of this position of *Ithaca*; some understand it to signify that it lies low; others explain it to signify that it is of a low position, but high with respect to the neighbouring

Book IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 191

Dulichium, *Samè*, and *Zacynthus* crown'd
With shady mountains, spread their isles around.

25 (These to the north and night's dark regions run,
Those to *Aurora* and the rising sun.)

Low lies our Isle, yet blest in fruitful stores;
Strong are her sons, tho' rocky are her shores;
And none, ah none so lovely to my sight,

30 Of all the lands that heav'n o'erspreads with light!
In vain *Calypso* long constrain'd my stay,
With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay;

With

bouring Islands; others take *αυυπερτάτη* (*excellentissima*) in another sense to imply the excellence of the country, which tho' it lies low, is productive of brave inhabitants, for *Homer* immediately adds *ἀγαθὴ κυροτρόφος*. *Strabo* gives a different exposition; *Ithaca* is *χθαμαλλή*, as it lies near to the Continent, and *αυυπερτάτη*, as it is the utmost of all the Islands towards the North, *πρὸς ἄρκτον*, for thus *πρὸς ζέφον* is to be underflood. So that *Ithaca*, adds he, is not of a low situation, but as it lies oppos'd to the Continent, nor the most lofty (*ὕψιλοτάτη*) but the most extrem of the northern Islands; for so *αυυπερτάτη* signifies. *Dacier* differs from *Strabo* in the explication of *πρὸς ἡὺ τ' ἡλιόν τε*, which he believes to mean the South; she applies the words to the East, or South-east, and appeals to the maps which so describe it. It is the most northern of the Islands, and joyns to the Continent of *Epirus*; it has *Dulichium* on the East, and on the South *Samos* and *Zacynthus*.

v. 31. In vain *Calypso* ———] *Enstathius* observes, that *Ulysses* repeats his refusal of the Goddess *Calypso* and *Circe* in the same words, to shew *Alcinous*, by a secret denial, that he could not be induc'd to stay from his country, or marry his daughter: He calls *Circe* *Δολιόσσα*, because she is skill'd in magical Incantations: He describes *Ithaca* with all its inconveniencies, to convince *Alcinous* of his veracity, and that he will not deceive him in other circumstances, when he gives so disadvantageous a character of a country

With all her charms as vainly *Circe* strove,
And added magick, to secure my love.

35 In pomps or joys, the palace or the grott
My country's image never was forgot,
My absent parents rose before my sight,
And distant lay contentment and delight.

Hear then the woes, which mighty *Jove* ordain'd
40 To wait my passage from the *Trojan* land.
The winds from *Ilion* to the *Cicons'* shore,
Beneath cold *Ismarus*, our vessels bore.

We

country for which he expresses so great a fondness; and lastly, in relating the death of his friends, he seems to be guilty of a tautology, in *Ἰλίου πτόλιν* & *μῆδον* &c. But *Annius Gellius* gives us the reason of it, *Atrocitatem rei his idem dicendo auxit, inculcavitque, non igitur illa ejusdem significationis repetitio, ignava & frigida videri debet.*

v. 41. *To the Cicons' shore.*] Here is the natural and true beginning of the *Odyssey*, which comprehends all the sufferings of *Ulysses*, and these sufferings take their date immediately after his leaving the shores of *Troy*; from that moment he endeavours to return to his own country, and all the difficulties he meets with in returning, enter into the subject of the Poem. But it may then be ask'd, if the *Odyssey* does not take up the space of ten years, since *Ulysses* wastes so many in his return; and is not this contrary to the nature of Epic Poetry, which is agreed must not at the longest exceed the duration of one year, or rather Campaign? The answer is, the Poet lets all the time pass which exceeds the bounds of Epic action, before he opens the Poem; thus *Ulysses* spends some time before he arrives at the Island of *Circe*, with her he continues one year, and seven with *Calypso*; he begins artificially at the conclusion of the action, and finds an opportunity to repeat the most considerable and necessary incidents which preceded the opening of the *Odyssey*; by this method he reduces the duration of it into less compass than the space of two months. This conduct is

- We boldly landed on the hostile place,
 And sack'd the city, and destroy'd the race,
 45 Their wives made captive, their possessions shar'd,
 And ev'ry soldier found a like reward.
 I then advis'd to fly; not so the rest,
 Who stay'd to revel, and prolong the feast:
 The fatted sheep and fable bulls they slay,
 50 And bowls flow round, and riot wastes the day.
 Mean-time the *Cicon*s, to their holds retir'd,
 Call on the *Cicon*s, with new fury fir'd;
 With early morn the gather'd country swarms,
 And all the Continent is bright with arms:
 55 Thick, as the budding leaves or rising flow'rs
 O'erspread the land, when spring descends in show'rs:

absolutely necessary, for from the time that the Poet introduces his Herod upon the stage, he ought to continue his action to the very end of it, that he may never afterwards appear idle or out of motion: This is verified in *Ulysses*; from the moment he leaves the Island *Ogygia* to the death of the Suitors, he is never out of view, never idle; he is always either in action, or preparing for it, 'till he is re-establish'd in his dominions. If the Poet had follow'd the natural order of the action, he, like *Lucan*, would not have wrote an Epic Poem, but an History in verse.

v. 44. *And sack'd the city* —] The Poet assigns no reason why *Ulysses* destroys this City of the *Ciconians*, but we may learn from the *Iliad*, that they were auxiliaries of *Troy*, Book the second.

*With great Euphemus the Ciconians move,
 Sprung from Troezenian Coeus, lov'd of Jove.*

And therefore *Ulysses* assaults them as enemies. *Enstathius*.

All expert soldiers, skill'd on foot to dare,
Or from the bounding courser urge the war.

Now Fortune changes (so the fates ordain)

60 Our hour was come, to taste our share of pain.

Close at the ships the bloody fight began,
Wounded they wound, and man expires on man.
Long as the morning sun increasing bright.

O'er heav'n's pure azure spread the growing light,

65 Promiscuous death the form of war confounds,

Each adverse battel gor'd with equal wounds:

But when his evening wheels o'erhung the main,

Then conquest crown'd the fierce *Ciconian* train.

Six brave companions from each ship we lost,

70 The rest escape in haste, and quit the coast.

With sails outspread we fly th' unequal strife,

Sad for their loss, but joyful of our life.

v. 69. *Six brave companions from each ship we lost.*] This is one of the passages which fell under the censure of *Zoilus*; it is very improbable, says that Critic, that each vessel should lose six men exactly, this seems a too equal distribution to be true, considering the chance of battle. But it has been answer'd, that *Ulysses* had twelve vessels, and that in this engagement he lost seventy two soldiers; so that the meaning is, that taking the total of his loss, and dividing it equally thro' the whole fleet, he found it amounted exactly to six men in every vessel. This will appear to be a true solution, if we remember that there was a necessity to supply the loss of any one ship out of the others that had suffer'd less; so that tho' one vessel lost more than the rest, yet being recruited equally from the rest of the fleet, there would be exactly six men wanting in every vessel. *Enstathius.*

Yet

Yet as we fled, our fellows rites we pay'd,
And thrice we call'd on each unhappy Shade.

- 75 Mean-while the God whose hand the thunder forms,
Drives clouds on clouds, and blackens heav'n with storms:
Wide o'er the waste the rage of *Boreas* sweeps,
And Night rush'd headlong on the shaded deeps.
Now here, now there, the giddy ships are born,
80 And all the rattling shrouds in fragments torn.
We furl'd the sail, we ply'd the lab'ring oar,
Took down our masts, and row'd our ships to shore.

v. 74. *And thrice we call'd on each unhappy Shade.*] This passage preserves a piece of Antiquity: It was the custom of the *Grecians*, when their friends dy'd upon foreign shores, to use this ceremony of recalling their souls, tho' they obtain'd not their bodies, believing by this method that they transported them to their own country: *Pindar* mentions the same practice,

Κέλεαι γὰρ ἰὼν
Ψυχὰν νόμιζας Φρίξος, &c.

That is, "*Phrixus* commands thee to call his soul into his own country." Thus the *Athenians*, when they lost any men at sea, went to the shores, and calling thrice on their names, rais'd a Cenotaph or empty monument to their memories; by performing which solemnity, they invited the shades of the departed to return, and perform'd all rites as if the bodies of the dead had really been buried by them in their sepulchres. *Eustathius*.

The *Romans* as well as the *Greeks* follow'd the same custom: thus *Virgil*,

—Et magnâ Manes ter voce vocavi.

The occasion of this practice arose from the opinion, that the souls of the departed were not admitted into the state of the happy, without the performance of the sepulchral solemnities.

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Two tedious days and two long nights we lay,
O'erwatch'd and batter'd in the naked bay.

85 But the third morning when *Aurora* brings,
We rear the masts, we spread the canvas wings;
Refresh'd, and careless on the deck reclin'd,
We sit, and trust the pilot and the wind.
Then to my native country had I sail'd;

90 But, the cape doubled, adverse winds prevail'd.
Strong was the tyde, which by the northern blast
Impell'd, our vessels on *Cythera* cast.

Nine days our fleet th' uncertain tempest bore
Far in wide ocean, and from sight of shore:
95 The tenth we touch'd, by various errors tost,
The land of *Lotos*, and the flow'ry coast.

We

v. 95. *The tenth we touch'd* ———
The Land of Lotos ———]

This passage has given occasion for much controversy; for since the *Lotophagi* in reality are distant from the *Malean* Cape twenty two thousand five hundred stades, *Ulysses* must sail above two thousand every day, if in nine days he sail'd to the *Lotophagi*. This objection would be unanswerable, if we place that nation in the *Atlantic* Ocean, but *Dacier* observes from *Strabo*, that *Polybius* examin'd this point, and thus gives us the result of it. This great Historian maintains, that *Homer* has not placed the *Lotophagi* in the *Atlantic* Ocean, as he does the Islands of *Circe* and *Calypso*, because it was improbable that in the compass of ten days the most favourable winds could have carry'd *Ulysses* from the *Malean* Cape into that Ocean; it therefore follows, that the Poet has given us the true situation of this nation, conformably to Geography, and placed it as it really lies in the *Mediterranean*; now in ten days a

We climb'd the beach,* and springs of water found,

Then spread our hasty banquet on the ground.

Three men were sent, deputed from the crew,

100 (An herald one) the dubious coast to view,

And learn what habitants possess the place.

They went, and found a hospitable race:

Not prone to ill, nor strange to foreign guest,

They eat, they drink, and nature gives the feast;

good wind will carry a vessel from *Malca* into the Mediterranean, as *Homer* relates.

This is an instance that *Homer* sometimes follows truth without fiction, at other times disguises it. But I confess I think *Homer's* Poetry would have been as beautiful if he had describ'd all his Islands in their true positions: His inconstancy in this point, may seem to introduce confusion and ambiguity, when the truth would have been more clear, and as beautiful in his Poetry.

Nothing can better shew the great deference which former ages pay'd *Homer*, than these defences of the learned Ancients; they continually ascribe his deviations from truth, (as in the instance before us) to design, not to ignorance; to his art as a Poet, and not to want of skill as a Geographer. In a writer of less fame, such relations might be thought errors, but in *Homer* they are either understood to be no errors, or if errors, they are vindicated by the greatest names of Antiquity.

Eustathius adds, that the Ancients disagree about this Island: some place it about *Cyrene*, from *Maurusia* of the *African* Moors; It is also named *Meninx*, and lies upon the *African* coast, near the lesser *Syrte*. It is about three hundred and fifty stades in length, and somewhat less in breadth: It is also nam'd *Lotophagitis* from *Lotos*.

v. 100. *An herald one.*] The reason why the Poet mentions the Herald in particular, is because his office was sacred; and by the common law of nations his person inviolable: *Ulysses* therefore joyns an Herald in this commission, for the greater security of those whom he sends to search the country. *Eustathius*.

- 105 The trees around them all their food produce,
Lotos the name, divine, nectareous juice!
 (Thence call'd *Lotophagi*) which whoso tastes,
 Infatiate riots in the sweet repasts,
 Nor other home nor other care intends,
 110 But quits his house, his country, and his friends:

v. 106. *Lotos*.] *Enstathius* assures us, that there are various kinds of it. It has been a question whether it is a herb, a root, or a tree: He is of opinion, that *Homer* speaks of it as an herb; for he calls it *ἀλκυονίδας*, and that the word *ἐπιλήσδας* is in its proper sense apply'd to the grazing of beasts, and therefore he judges it not to be a tree, or root. He adds, there is an *Egyptian Lotos*, which, as *Herodotus* affirms, grows in great abundance along the *Nile* in the time of its inundations; it resembles (says that Historian in his *Enterpe*) a Lily, the *Egyptians* dry it in the sun, then take the pulp out of it, which grows like the head of a poppy, and bake it as bread; this kind of it agrees likewise with the *ἀλκυονίδας* of *Homer*. *Athenans* writes of the *Lybian Lotos* in the fourteenth book of his *Deipnosophist*; he quotes the words of *Polybius* in the twelfth book of his History, now not extant; that Historian speaks of it as an eye-witness, having examin'd the nature of it. "The *Lotos* is a tree of no great height, rough and
 "thorny: it bears a green leaf, somewhat thicker and broader
 "than that of the bramble or briar; its fruit at first is like the
 "ripe berries of the Myrtle, both in size and colour, but when it
 "ripens it turns to purple; it is then about the bigness of an
 "olive, it is round, and contains a very small kernel; when it is
 "ripe they gather it, and bruising it among bread-corn, they put
 "it up into a vessel, and keep it as food for their slaves; they
 "dress it after the same manner for their other domestics, but
 "first take out the kernel from it: It has the taste of a fig, or
 "dates, but is of a far better smell: They likewise make a wine
 "of it, by steeping and bruising it in water; it has a very agreea-
 "ble taste, like wine temper'd with honey. They drink it with-
 "out mixing it with water, but it will not keep above ten days,
 "they therefore make it only in small quantities for immediate
 "use." Perhaps it was this last kind of *Lotos*, which the com-
 panions of *Ulysses* tasted; and if it was thus prepar'd, it gives a
 reason why they were overcome with it; for being a wine, it had
 the power of intoxication.

The

The three we feat, from off th' enchanting ground
We dragg'd reluctant, and by force we bound:
The rest in haste forfok the pleasing shore,
Or, the charm tasted, had return'd no more.

115 Now plac'd in order, on their banks they sweep
The sea's smooth face, and cleave the hoary deep;
With heavy hearts we labour thro' the tyde,
To coasts unknown, and oceans yet untry'd.

The land of *Cyclops* first; a savage kind,
120 Nor tam'd by manners, nor by laws confin'd:

Untaught

v. 114. *The charm once tasted, had return'd no more.*] It must be confess'd, that the effects of this *Lotos* are extraordinary, and seem fabulous: How then shall we reconcile the relation to credibility? The foundation of it might perhaps be no more than this; The companions of *Ulysses* might be willing to settle among these *Lotophagi*, being won by the pleasure of the place, and tired with a life of danger and the perils of seas. Or perhaps it is only an Allegory, to teach us that those who indulge themselves in pleasures, are with difficulty withdrawn from them, and want an *Ulysses* to lead them by a kind of violence into the paths of glory.

v. 119. *The land of Cyclops first*——] *Homer* here confines himself to the true Geography of *Sicily*: for, in reality, a ship may easily sail in one day from the land of the *Lotophagi* to *Sicily*: These *Cyclops* inhabited the western part of that Island, about *Drepane* and *Lilybaeum*. *Bochart* shews us, that they derive their name from the place of their habitation; for the *Phaeacians* call them *Chek-lub*, by contraction for *Chek-lelub*; that is, the gulph of *Lilybaeum*, or the men who dwell about the *Lilybaeum* gulph. The *Greeks* (who understood not the *Phaeacian* language) form'd the word *Cyclop*, from *Chek-lub*, from the affinity of sound; which word in the *Greek* language, signifying a circular eye, might give occasion to fable that they had but one large round eye in the middle of their foreheads. *Dacier*.

Untaught to plant, to turn the glebe and sow,
They all their products to free nature owe.

Euſtathius tells us, that the eye of *Cyclops* is an allegory, to represent that in anger, or any other violent passion, men see but one single object, as that passion directs, or see but with one eye: οὐκ ἓν τι, καὶ μόνον ὁρᾷ; and that passion transforms us into a kind of savages, and makes us brutal and sanguinary, like this *Polypheme*; and he that by reason extinguishes such a passion, may like *Ulyſſes* be said to put out that eye that made him see but one single object.

I have already given another reason of this fiction; namely their wearing a headpiece, or martial Vizor that had but one sight thro' it. The vulgar form their judgments from appearances; and a mariner, who pass'd these coasts at a distance, observing the resemblance of a broad eye in the forehead of one of these *Cyclops*, might relate it accordingly, and impose it as a truth upon the credulity of the ignorant: it is notorious that things equally monstrous have found belief in all ages.

But it may be ask'd if there were any such persons who bore the name of *Cyclops*? No less an Historian than *Thucydides* informs us, that *Sicily* was at first possess'd and inhabited by Giants, by the *Laſtrigons* and *Cyclops*, a barbarous and inhuman people: But he adds, that these savages dwelt only in one part of that Island.

Codrus gives us an exact description of the *Cyclops*: Εὐαὶστὸν ὁδοῦσιν ἐμπόρῃσι κύκλωπι ἐν Σικελίᾳ ἢ ἐν ὀφθαλμῷ. &c. "*Ulyſſes* fell among the *Cyclops* in *Sicily*, a people not one-ey'd, according to the Mythologists, but men like other men, only of a more gigantic stature, and of a barbarous and savage temper."

From this description, we may see what *Homer* writes as a Poet, and what as an Historian; he paints these people in general agreeably to their persons, only disguises some features, to give an ornament to his relation, and to introduce the Marvellous, which demands a place chiefly in Epic Poetry.

What *Homer* speaks of the fertility of *Sicily*, is agreeable to History: It was call'd anciently *Romani Imperii Horreum*. *Pliny*, lib. 10. cap. 10. writes, that the *Leontine* plains bear for every grain of corn, an hundred. *Diodorus Siculus* relates in his History what *Homer* speaks in Poetry, that the fields of *Leontium* yield wheat without the culture of the husbandman: he was an eye-witness, being a native of the Island. From hence in general it may be observ'd, that where-ever we can trace *Homer*, we find, if not historic truth, yet the resemblance of it; that is, as plain truth as can be related without converting his Poem into an History.

The

The soil untill'd a ready harvest yields,
With wheat and barley wave the golden fields,

125 Spontaneous wines from weighty clusters pour,
And Jove descends in each prolific show'r.

By these no statutes and no rights are known,
No council held, no Monarch fills the throne,

But

v. 127. *By these no statutes and no rights are known,
No council held, no Monarch fills the throne.*]

Plato (observes *Spondanus*) in his third book of laws, treats of Government as practis'd in the first ages of the world; and refers to this passage of *Homer*; "Mankind was originally independant; every Master of a family was a kind of a King of his family," and reign'd over his wife and children like these *Cyclopes*," according to the expression of *Homer*,

Τόσσιν δ' ἔτι ἀγῶραι βυληφόροι, ἔτα δέμους.

Aristotle likewise complains, that even in his times, in many places, men lived without laws, according to their own fancies, *ἢ ἕκαστος ὡς βούλεται, κυκλωπικῶς δέμουςιν, αἰδέων, ἢ ἀδύχων*, referring likewise to this passage of *Homer*.

Dacier adds from *Plato*, that after the Deluge, three manners of life succeeded among mankind; the first was rude and savage; men were afraid of a second flood, and therefore inhabited the summits of mountains, without any dependance upon one another, and each was absolute in his own family: The second was less brutal; as the fear of the Deluge wore away by degrees, they descended toward the bottom of mountains, and began to have some intercourse: The third was more polish'd; when a full security from the apprehensions of a flood was establish'd by time, they then began to inhabit the plains, and a more general commerce by degrees prevailing, they enter'd into societies, and establish'd laws for the general good of the whole community. These *Cyclopes* maintain'd the first state of life in the days of *Ulysses*; they had no intercourse with other societies, by reason of their barbarities, and consequently their manners were not at all polish'd by the general laws of humanity. This account agrees excellently with the holy Scriptures, and perhaps *Plato* borrow'd it from the writings of *Moses*; after the Deluge men retreated to mountains for
K. 5. fear

- But high on hills or airy cliffs they dwell,
 130 Or deep in caves whose entrance leads to hell.
 Each rules his race, his neighbour not his care,
 Heedless of others, to his own severe.
 Oppos'd to the *Cyclopean* coasts, there lay
 An Isle, whose hills their subject fields survey;
 135 Its name *Lacæa*, crown'd with many a grove,
 Where savage goats thro' pathless thickets rove:
 No needy mortals here, with hunger bold,
 Or wretched hunters thro' the wint'ry cold
 Pursue their flight, but leave them safe to bound
 140 From hill to hill, o'er all the desert ground.
 Nor knows the soil to feed the fleecy care,
 Or feels the labours of the crooked share,

fear of a second flood; their chief riches, like these *Cyclopeans*, consisted in flocks and herds; and every master of a family ruled his house without any controul or subordination.

v. 129. *But high on hills — or deep in caves.*] This is said, to give an air of probability to the revenge which *Ulysses* takes upon this giant, and indeed to the whole story. He describes his solitary life, to shew that he was utterly destitute of assistance; and it is for the same reason, continues *Enslathius*, that the Poet relates that he left his fleet under a desert neighbouring Island, namely to make it probable, that the *Cyclops* could not seize it, or pursue *Ulysses*, having no shipping.

v. 134. *An Isle, whose hills, &c.*] This little Isle is now call'd *Agæsa*, which signifies the Isle of goats. *Claverius* describes it after the manner of Homer, *Prata mollia, & irrigua, solum fertile, portam commodam, fontes limpidos*. It is not certain whether the Poet gives any name to it; perhaps it had not received any in these ages, it being without inhabitants; tho' some take *λαχμία* for a proper name, as is observ'd by *Enslathius*.

But

But uninhabited, untill'd, unfown
It lies, and breeds the bleating goat alone.

- 145 For there no vessel with vermilion prone,
Or bark of traffic, glides from shore to shore;
The rugged race of savages, unskill'd
The seas to traverse, or the ships to build,
Gaze on the coast, nor cultivate the soil,
150 Unlearn'd in all th' industrious arts of toil.
Yet here all products and all plants abound,
Sprung from the fruitful genius of the ground;
Fields waving high with heavy crops are seen,
And vines that flourish in eternal green,
155 Refreshing meads along the murm'ring main,
And fountains streaming down the fruitful plain.
A port there is, inclos'd on either side,
Where ships may rest, unanchor'd and unty'd;

v. 144. *Bleating Goat.*] It is exactly thus in the original, ver. 124. *μυαδῶν, balantes*; which *Pollux, lib. 5.* observes not to be the proper term for the voice of goats, which is *μυαγῶν.*

v. 165. *Hither some fav'ring God——*] This circumstance is inserted with great judgment, *Ulysses* otherwise might have landed in *Sicily*, and fall'n into the hands of the *Cyclopeans*, and consequently been lost inevitably: He therefore piously ascribes his safety, by being driven upon this desolate Island, to the guidance of the Gods; he uses it as a retreat, leaves his navy there, and passes over into *Sicily* in one single vessel, undiscover'd by these gigantic savages; this reconciles the relation to probability, and renders his escape practicable. *Enstathius.*

- 'Till the glad mariners incline to sail,
 160 And the sea whitens with the rising gale.
 High at its head, from out the cavern'd rock
 In living rills a gushing fountain broke:
 Around it, and above, for ever green
 The bushing alders form'd a shady scene.
 165 Hither some fav'ring God, beyond our thought,
 Thro' all-surrounding shade our navy brought;
 For gloomy Night descended on the main,
 Nor glimmer'd *Phæbe* in th' ethereal plain:
 But all unseen the clouded Island lay,
 170 And all unseen the surge and rowling sea,
 'Till safe we anchor'd in the shelter'd bay:
 Our sails we gather'd, cast our cables o'er,
 And slept secure along the sandy shore.
 Soon as again the rosy morning shone,
 175 Reveal'd the landscape and the scene unknown,
 With wonder seiz'd we view the pleasing ground,
 And walk delighted, and expatiate round.
 Rows'd by the woodland nymphs, at early dawn,
 The mountain goats came bounding o'er the lawn:

In

v. 178. *The woodland nymphs.*] This passage is not without obscurity, and it is not easy to understand what is meant by *the daughters of Jupiter*. *Enstatius* tells us, the Poet speaks allegorically, and that he means to specify the plants and herbs of the field.

- 180 In haste our fellows to the ships repair,
 For arms and weapons of the sylvan war;
 Strait in three squadrons all our crew we part,
 And bend the bow, or wing the missile dart;
 The bounteous Gods afford a copious prey.
- 185 And nine fat goats each vessel bears away:
 The royal bark had ten. Our ships compleat
 We thus supply'd, (for twelve were all the fleet.)

field. *Jupiter* denotes the air, not only in *Homer*, but in the *Latin* Poets. Thus *Virgil*,

*Tum pater omnipotens fecundis indribus Aether
 Conjugis in gremio lata descendit*

and consequently the herbs and plants, being nourish'd by the mild air and fruitful rains, may be said to be the daughters of *Jupiter*, or offspring of the skies; and these goats and beasts of the field, being fed by these plants and herbs, may be said to be awaken'd by the daughters of *Jupiter*, that is, they awake to feed upon the herbage early in the morning. *Kēpas Διός, ἀλληγορικῶς αἱ τῶν φυτῶν αὐξητικαὶ δυνάμεις, αἷς ὁ Ζεὺς αἰνῶν.* Thus *Homer* makes Deities of the vegetative faculties and virtues of the field. I fear such boldnesses would not be allow'd in modern Poetry.

It must be confess'd that this interpretation is very refin'd: But I am sure it will be a more natural explication to take these for the real mountain Nymphs (*Oreades*) as they are in many places of the *Odyssey*; the very expression is found in the sixth book,

—Νύμφας κῆρας Διός—

and there signifies the Nymphs attending upon *Diana* in her sports: Immediately after, *Ulysses*, being awaken'd by a sudden noise, mistakes *Nausicaa* and her damsels for Nymphs of the mountains or floods; and this conjecture will not be without probability, if we remember that these Nymphs were huntresses, as is evident from their relation to *Diana*. Why then may not the other expression be meant of the Nymphs that are fabled to inhabit the mountains?

Here,

Here, till the setting sun row'd down the light,
We fate indulging in the genial rite :

190 Nor wines were wanting; those from ample jars
We drain'd, the prize of our *Ciconian* wars.

The land of *Cyclops* lay in prospect near;
The voice of goats and bleating flocks we hear,
And from their mountains rising smokes appear. }

195 Now sunk the sun, and darkness cover'd o'er
The face of things: along the sea-beat shore
Sate we slept: But when the sacred dawn
Arising glitter'd o'er the dewy lawn,
I call'd my fellows, and these words address.

200 My dear associates, here indulge your rest:
While, with my single ship, adventurous I
Go forth, the manners of yon men to try;

v. 201. *While, with my single ship, advent'rous I.*] The Reader may be pleas'd to observe, that the Poet has here given the reins to his fancy, and run out into a luxuriant description of *Ægusa* and *Sicily*: he refreshes the mind of the Reader with a pleasing and beautiful scene, before he enters upon a story of so much horror, as this of the *Cyclops*.

A very sufficient reason may be assign'd, why *Ulysses* here goes in person to search this land: He dares not, as *Ænethius* remarks, trust his companions; their disobedience among the *Ciconians*, and their unworthy conduct among the *Lotophagi*, have convinc'd him that no confidence is to be repos'd in them: This seems probable, and upon this probability *Homer* proceeds to bring about the punishment of *Polypheme*, which the wisdom of *Ulysses* effects, and it is an action of importance, and consequently ought to be perform'd by the Heroe of the Poem.

Whether

Book IX. *HOMER's ODYSSEY.* 207

- Whether a race unjust, of barb'rous might,
 Rude, and unconscious of a stranger's right;
 205 Or such who harbour pity in their breast,
 Revere the Gods, and succour the distressed?
 This said, I climb'd my vessel's lofty side;
 My train obey'd me and the ship unty'd.
 In order seated on their banks, they sweep
 210 Neptune's smooth face, and cleave the yielding deep.
 When to the nearest verge of land we drew,
 Fast by the sea a lonely cave we view,
 High, and with dark'ning lawrels cover'd o'er;
 Where sheep and goats lay slumb'ring round the shore.
 215 Near this, a fence of marble from the rock,
 Brown with o'er-arching pine, and spreading oak,
 A Giant-shepherd here his flock maintains
 Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
 In shelter thick of horrid shade reclin'd;
 220 And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind.
 A form enormous! far unlike the race
 Of human birth, in stature, or in face;

As

v. 221. *A form enormous! far unlike the race of human birth.*]
Goropius Becanus, an Antwerpian, has wrote a large discourse to
prove, that there never were any such men as Giants; contrary
to the testimony both of prophane and sacred History: Thus Mo-
ses speaks of the Rephains of Aferoth, the Zamxaminims of Ham,
the Euims of Moab, and Anakims of Hebron. See Deut. ii. ver. 20.
 " That

As some lone mountain's monstrous growth he stood,
Crown'd with rough thickets, and a nodding weed.

225 I left my vessel at the point of land,

And close to guard it, gave our crew command:

With only twelve, the boldest and the best,

I seek th' adventure, and forsake the rest.

Then

"That also was call'd a land of Giants, it was a great people, and
"tall as the *Zamarrini*." Thus *Goliath* must be allow'd to be
a Giant, for he was six cubits and a span, that is, nine feet and a
span in height; his coat of mail weigh'd five thousand shekels of
brass, about one hundred and fifty pounds; (but I confess others
understand the lesser *Shekel*) the head of his spear alone weigh'd
six hundred shekels of iron, that is about eighteen or nineteen
pounds. We find the like relations in prophane History: *Plutarch*
in his life of *Theseus* says, that age was productive of men of pro-
digious stature, Giants. Thus *Diodorus Siculus*; *Aegyptii scribunt*,
Isidis atate, fuisse vasto corpore homines, quos Græci dicere Gigantos.
Herodotus affirms that the body of *Orestes* was dug up, and appear'd
to be seven cubits long; but *Aulus Gellius* believes this to be an
error. *Josephus* writes, *l. 18. cap. 6.* that *Vitellius* sent a Jew
named *Eleazar*, seven cubits in height, as a present from *Artabanus*
King of the *Parthians*, to *Tiberius Cæsar*; this man was
ten feet and a half high. *Pliny*, *7. 16.* speaks of a man that was
nine feet nine inches high; and in another place, *6. 30.* *Sybor-*
tas, gentem Aethiopum Nomadum, octona cubita longitudine en-
codere.

Thus it is evident, that there have been men of very extraordi-
nary stature in former ages. Tho' perhaps such instances were
not frequent in any age or any nation. So that *Homer* only am-
plifies, not invents; and as there was really a people call'd *Cyclo-*
peans, so they might be men of great stature, or Giants.

It may seem strange that in all ancient stories the first planters
of most nations are recorded to be Giants; I scarce can persuade
my self but such accounts are generally fabulous; and hope to be
pardon'd for a conjecture which may give a seeming reason how
such stories came to prevail. The *Greeks* were a people of very
great antiquity; they made many expeditions, as appears from
Jason, &c. and sent out frequent Colonies; Now the head of eve-
ry

- Then took a goatskin fill'd with precious wine,
 230 The gift of *Maron*, of *Evansheus'* line,
 (The Priest of *Phœbus* at th' *Ismarian* shrine)
 In sacred shade his honour'd mansion stood
 Amidst *Apollo's* consecrated wood;
 Him, and his house, heav'n mov'd my mind to save,
 235 And costly presents in return he gave;
 Sev'n golden talents to perfection wrought,
 A silver bowl that held a copious draught.

ry Colony was call'd *Anax*, and these adventurers being persons of great figure in story, were recorded as men of war, of might and renown, thro' the old world: It is therefore not impossible but the *Hebrews* might form their word *Anac*, from the *Greek* *anax*, and use it to denote persons of uncommon might and abilities. These they call'd *Anac*, and sons of *Anac*; and afterwards in a less proper sense used it to signify men of uncommon stature, or Giants. So that in this sense, all nations may be said to be originally peopled by a son of *Anac*, or a Giant. But this is submitted as a conjecture to the Reader's judgment.

v. 229. *Precious wine the gift of Maron.*] Such digressions as these are very frequent in *Homer*, but I am far from thinking them always beauties: 'Tis true, they give variety to Poetry; but whether that be an equivalent for calling off the attention of the Reader from the more important action, and diverting it with small incidents, is what I much question. It is not indeed impossible but this *Maron* might have been the friend of *Homer*, and this praise of him will then be a monument of his grateful disposition; and in this view, a beauty. It must be confess'd that *Homer* makes use of this wine to a very good effect, *viz.* to bring about the destruction of *Polypheme*, and his own deliverance; and therefore it was necessary to set it off very particularly, but this might have been done in fewer lines. As it now stands it is a little Episode; our expectations are rais'd to learn the event of so uncommon an adventure, when all of a sudden *Homer* breaks the story, and gives us a History of *Maron*. But I distrust my judgment much rather than *Homer's*.

And

And twelve large vessels of unmingled wine,
Mellifluous, undecaying, and divine!

240 Which now some ages from his race conceal'd,
The hoary Sire in gratitude reveal'd.
Such was the wine: to quench whose fervent steam,
Scarce twenty measures from the living stream
To cool one cup suffic'd: the goblet crown'd
245 Breath'd aromatic fragrances around.

Of this an ample vase we heav'd a-board,
And brought another with provisions stor'd.
My soul foreboded I should find the bow'r
Of some fell monster, fierce with barb'rous pow'r,
250 Some rustic wretch, who liv'd in heav'n's despight,
Contemning laws, and trampling on the right.

The

v. 243. *Scarce twenty measures from the living stream
To cool one cup suffic'd———]*

There is no wine of so strong a body as to bear such a disproportionable quantity; but *Homer* amplifies the strength of it to prepare the Reader for its surprizing effects immediately upon *Polypheme*.

v. 250. *Some rustic wretch, who liv'd, &c.]* This whole passage must be consider'd as told by a person long after the adventure was past, otherwise how should *Ulysses* know that this cave was the habitation of a savage monster before he had seen him? and when he tells us that himself and twelve companions went to search, what people were inhabitants of this Island? *Enslathins* and *Dacier* seem both to have overlook'd this observation; for in a following note she condemns *Ulysses* for not flying from the Island, as he was advis'd by his companions. But if, on the other hand, we suppose that *Ulysses* was under apprehensions from the savageness

The cave we found, but vacant all within,

(His flock the Giant tended on the green)

But round the grott we gaze, and all we view

255 In order rang'd, our admiration drew:

The bending shelves with loads of cheeses prest,

The folded flocks each sep'rate from the rest,

(The larger here, and there the lesser lambs,

The new-fall'n young here bleating for their dams;

260 The kid distinguish'd from the lambkin lies:)

The cavern ecchoes with responsive cries.

Capacious chargers all around were lay'd,

Full pails, and vessels of the milking trade.

With fresh provision hence our fleet to store

265 My friends advise me, and to quit the shore;

Or drive a flock of sheep and goats away,

Consult our safety, and put off to sea.

Their wholesome counsel rashly I declin'd,

Curious to view the man of monstrous kind,

270 And try what social rites a savage lends:

Dire rites alas! and fatal to my friends!

Then first a fire we kindle, and prepare

For his return with sacrifice and prayer.

ness of the place, of finding a savage race of people, it will be natural enough that his mind should forebode as much; and it appears from other passages, that this sort of instinctive presage was a favourite opinion of *Homer's*.

The

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- The loaden shelves afford us full repast;
 275 We sit expecting. Lo ! he comes at last.
 Near half a forest on his back he bore,
 And cast the pond'rous burden at the door.
 It thunder'd as it fell. We trembled then,
 And sought the deep recesses of the den.
- 280 New driv'n before him, thro' the arching rock,
 Came tumbling, heaps on heaps, th' unnumber'd flock :
 Big-udder'd ewes, and goats of female kind,
 (The males were penn'd in outward courts behind)
 Then, heav'd on high, a rock's enormous weight
 285 To the cave's mouth he roll'd, and clos'd the gate.
 (Scarce twenty four-wheel'd cars, compact and strong,
 The massy load cou'd bear, or roll along)
 He next betakes him to his evening cares,
 And sitting down, to milk his flocks prepares;
- 290 Of half their udders eases first the dams,
 Then to the mother's teat submits the lambs.
 Half the white stream to hard'ning cheese he prest,
 And high in wicker baskets heap'd : the rest
 Reserv'd in bowls, supply'd his nightly feast.
- 295 His labour done, he fir'd the pyle that gave
 A sudden blaze, and lighted all the cave:

We

We stand discover'd by the rising fires;
Askance the giant glares, and thus enquires.

What are ye, guests? on what adventure, say,

300 Thus far ye wander thro' the wat'ry way?
Pirates perhaps, who seek thro' seas unknown
The lives of others, and expose your own?

His voice like thunder thro' the cavern sounds;
My bold companions thrilling fear confounds.

305 Appall'd at sight of more than mortal man!
At length, with heart recover'd, I began.

From Troy's fam'd fields, sad wand'ers o'er the
main,

Behold the reliicks of the *Grecian* train!

Thro' various seas by various perils tost,

310 And forc'd by storms, unwilling, on your coast;
Far from our destin'd course, and native land,
Such was our fate, and such high *Jove's* command!

v. 307. *From Troy's fam'd fields, &c.* This speech is very well adapted to make an impression upon *Polypheme*. *Ulysses* applies to move either his fears or his compassion; he tells him he is an unfortunate person, and comes as a suppliant; and if this prevails nothing, he adds, he is a subject of the great *Agamemnon*, who had lately destroy'd a mighty kingdom: Which is spoken to make him afraid to offer violence to the subject of a King who had power to revenge any injuries offer'd his people. To intimidate him further, he concludes with the mention of the Gods, and in particular of *Jupiter*, as avengers of any breach of the laws of hospitality: These are arguments well chosen to move any person, but an inhuman *Polypheme*. *Enstathius*.

Nor

214 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book IX.

Nor what we are befits us to disclaim,

Atrides' friends, (in arms a mighty name)

315 Who taught proud *Troy* and all her sons to bow;

Victors of late, but humble suppliants now!

Low at thy knee thy succour we implore;

Respect us, human, and relieve us, poor.

At least some hospitable gift bestow;

320 'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe:

'Tis what the Gods require: Those Gods revere,

The poor and stranger are their constant care;

To *Jove* their cause, and their revenge belongs.

He wanders with them, and he feels their wrongs.

325 Fools that ye are! (the Savage thus replies,

His inward fury blazing at his eyes)

Or strangers, distant far from our abodes,

To bid me rev'rence or regard the Gods.

Know then we *Cyclops* are, a race above

330 Those air-bred people, and their goat-nurs'd *Jove* :

And learn, our pow'r proceeds with thee and thine,

Not as He wills, but as our selves incline.

But answer, the good ship that brought ye o'er,

Where lies she anchor'd? near, or off the shore?

335 Thus he. His meditated fraud I find,

(Vers'd in the turns of various humankind)

And

And cautious, thus. Against a dreadful rock,

Fast by your shore the gallant vessel broke.

Scarce with these few I scap'd; of all my train,

340 Whom angry Neptune whelm'd beneath the main;

The scatter'd wreck the winds blew back again.

He answer'd with his deed. His bloody hand

Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band;

And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor:

345 The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore.

Torn limb from limb, he spread his horrid feast,

And fierce devours it like a mountain beast:

v. 344. *And dash'd like dogs——*
The pavement swims, &c.]

There is a great beauty in the versification in the original.

Ὠν δὲ δύω μάρφας, ὥς σκύλας ποτὶ γαίῃ
 κόπτ'. ἐν δ' εἰκίφαλος χαμάδις ῥέε, δύνει δὲ γαίαν.

Dionysius Halicarn. takes notice of it, in his Dissertation upon placing words: When the companions of *Ulysses*, says that Author, are dash'd against the rock, to express the horror of the action, *Homer* dwells upon the most inharmonious harsh letters and syllables: he no where uses any softness, or any run of verses to please the ear. *Scaliger* injudiciously condemns this description; "*Homer*," says he, makes use of the most offensive and leathsome expressions, more fit for a butcher's shambles than the majesty of Heroic Poetry." *Macrobius*, lib. 5. cap. 13. of his *Saturnalia*, commends these lines of *Homer*, and even prefers them before the same description in *Virgil*; his words are, *Narrationem facti nudam Maro posuit, Homerus adhibet misceat, & dolore narrandi invidiam crudelitatis aequavit.* And indeed he must be a strange Critic that expects soft verses upon a horrible occasion, whereas the verses ought, if possible, to represent the thought they are intended to convey; and every person's ear will inform him that *Homer* has not in this passage executed this rule unsuccessfully.

He

216 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book IX.*

He sucks the marrow, and the blood he drains,
Nor entrails, flesh, nor solid bone remains.

350 We see the death from which we cannot move,
And humbled groan beneath the hand of Jove.
His ample maw with human carnage fill'd,
A milky deluge next the giant swill'd;
Then stretch'd in length o'er half the cavern'd rock,

355 Lay senseless, and supine, amidst the flock.
To seize the time, and with a sudden wound
To fix the slumb'ring monster to the ground,
My soul impels me; and in act I stand
To draw the sword; but wisdom held my hand.

360 A deed so rash had finish'd all our fate,
No mortal forces from the lofty gate
Could roll the rock. In hopeless grief we lay,
And sigh, expecting the return of day.
Now did the rosy-finger'd morn arise,

365 And shed her sacred light along the skies.
He wakes, he lights the fire, he milks the dams,
And to the mother's teat submits the lambs.
The task thus finish'd of his morning hours,
Two more he snatches, murders, and devours.

370 Then pleas'd and whistling, drives his flock before;
Removes the rocky mountain from the door,

And

And shuts again; with equal ease dispos'd,

As a light quiver's lid is op'd and clos'd.

His giant voice the ecchoing region fills:

375 His flocks, obedient, spread o'er all the hills.

Thus left behind, ev'n in the last despair

I thought, devis'd, and *Pallas* heard my prayer.

Revenge, and doubt, and caution, work'd my breast;

But this of many counsels seem'd the best:

380 The monster's club within the cave I spy'd,

A tree of stateliest growth, and yet undry'd,

Green from the wood; of height and bulk so vast,

The largest ship might claim it for a mast.

This shorten'd of its top, I gave my train

385 A fathom's length, to shape it and to plain;

The narrow'r end I sharpen'd to a spire;

Whose point we harden'd with the force of fire,

And hid it in the dust that strow'd the cave.

Then to my few companions, bold and brave,

390 Propos'd, who first the vent'rous deed should try?

In the broad orbit of his monstrous eye

To plunge the brand, and twirl the pointed wood;

When slumber next should tame the man of blood.

Just as I wish'd, the lots were cast on four;
 395 My self the fifth. We stand, and wait the hour.
 He comes with evening: all his fleet flock
 Before him march, and pour into the rock:
 Not one, or male or female, stay'd behind;
 (So fortune chanc'd, or so some God design'd)
 400 Then heaving high the stone's unwieldy weight,
 He roll'd it on the cave, and clos'd the gate.
 First down he sits, to milk the woolly dams,
 And then permits their udder to the lambs.
 Next seiz'd two wretches more, and headlong cast,
 405 Brain'd on the rock; his second dire repast.
 I then approach'd him reeking with their gore,
 And held the brimming goblet foaming o'er:

v. 394. *The lots were cast*—] *Ulysses* bids his friends to cast lots; this is done to shew that he would not voluntarily expose them to so imminent danger. If he had made the choice himself, they whom he had chosen might have thought he had given them up to destruction, and they whom he had rejected might have judg'd it a stain upon them as a want of merit, and so have complain'd of injustice; but by this method he avoids these inconveniencies.

v. 399. *Or so some God design'd.*] *Ulysses* ascribes it to the influence of the Gods, that *Polypheme* drives the whole flock into his den, and does not separate the females from the males as he had before done; for by this accident *Ulysses* makes his escape, as appears from the following part of the story. *Homer* here uses the *εὐδοκίμους*, to shew the suspicion which *Polypheme* might entertain that *Ulysses* had other companions abroad who might plunder his flocks; and this gives another reason why he drove them all into his cave, namely for the greater security.

Cyclop!

Cyclop! since human flesh has been thy feast,
Now drain this goblet, potent to digest:

- 410 Know hence what treasures in our ship we lost,
And what rich liquors other climates boast.
We to thy shore the precious freight shall bear,
If home thou send us, and vouchsafe to spare.
But oh! thus furious, thirsting thus for gore,
415 The sons of men shall ne'er approach thy shore,
And never shalt thou taste this Nectar more.

}
}

He heard, he took, and pouring down his throat
Delighted swill'd the large luxurious draught.

More! give me more, he cry'd: the boon be thine,

- 420 Whoe'er thou art that bear'st celestial wine!
Declare thy name; not mortal is this juice,
Such as th' unblest *Cyclopean* climes produce,
(Tho' sure our vine the largest cluster yields,
And *Jove's* scorn'd thunder serves to drench our fields)

- 425 But this descended from the best abodes,
A rill of Nectar, streaming from the Gods.

He said, and greedy grasp'd the heady bowl,
Thrice drain'd, and pour'd the deluge on his soul.
His sense lay cover'd with the dozy fume;

- 430 While thus my fraudulent speech I reassume,

Thy promis'd boon, O Cyclop! now I claim,

And plead my title: *Noman* is my name.

By that distinguish'd from my tender years,

'Tis what my parents call me, and my peers.

435 The Giant then. Our promis'd grace receive,

The hospitable boon we mean to give:

When all thy wretched crew have felt my pow'r,

Noman shall be the last I will devour.

v. 432. ——— *Noman is my name.*] I will not trouble the Reader with a long account of *ἄνις* to be found in *Eustathius*, who seems delighted with this piece of pleasantry; nor with what *Dacier* observes; who declares she approves of it extremely, and calls it a very happy imagination. If it were modesty in me to dissent from *Homer*, and two Commentators, I would own my opinion of it, and acknowledge the whole to be nothing but a collusion of words, and fitter to have place in a Farce or Comedy, than in Epic Poetry. *Lucian* has thus used it, and apply'd it to raise laughter in one of his facetious dialogues. The whole wit or jest lies in the ambiguity of *ἄνις*, which *Ulysses* imposes upon *Polypheme* as his own name, which in reality signifies *No Man*. I doubt not but *Homer* was well pleased with it, for afterwards he plays upon the words, and calls *Ulysses* *ἄνιδανός ἄνις*. But the faults of *Homer* have a kind of veneration, perhaps, like old age, from their antiquity.

Euripides has translated this whole passage in his Tragedy, call'd the *Cyclops*. The Chorus begins thus, *Why dost thou thus cry out, Cyclops? Cyc. I am undone.* Cho. *You seem to be in a woful condition.* Cyc. *I am utterly miserable.* Cho. *You have been drunk and fall'n into the embers.* Cyc. *Noman has undone me.* Cho. *Well then No man has injur'd you.* Cyc. *Noman has blinded me.* Cho. *Then you are not blind.*

This appears to me more fit for the two *Sissa's* in *Plautus*, than for Tragic or Epic Poetry; and I fancy an Author who should introduce such a sport of words upon the stage, even in the Comedy of our days, would meet with small applause.

He

He said; then nodding with the fumes of wine

440 Dropt his huge head, and snoring lay supine.

His neck obliquely o'er his shoulder hung,

Prest with the weight of sleep that tames the strong;

There belcht the mingled steams of wine and blood,

And human flesh, his indigested food.

445 Sudden I stir the embers, and inspire

With animating breath the seeds of fire;

Each drooping spirit with bold words repair,

And urge my train the dreadful deed to dare.

The stake now glow'd beneath the burning bed

450 (Green as it was) and sparkled fiery red.

Then forth the vengeful instrument I bring;

With beating hearts my fellows form a ring.

Urg'd by some present God, they swift let fall

The pointed torment on his visual ball.

455 My self above them from a rising ground

Guide the sharp stake, and twirl it round and round,

As when a shipwright stands his workmen o'er,

Who ply the wimble, some huge beam to bore;

Urg'd

v. 458. *Who ply the wimble.*] This and the following comparison are drawn from low life, but ennobled with a dignity of expression. Instead of *ἐκόντες*, *Aristarchus* reads *ἐχόντες*, as *Enstathius* informs us. The similitudes are natural and lively, we are made spectators of what they represent. *Sophocles* has imitated this, in the Tragedy where *OEdipus* tears out his own eyes; and *Euripides*

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- Urg'd on all hands it nimbly spins about,
 460 The grain deep-piercing till it scoops it out:
 In his broad eye so whirls the fiery wood;
 From the pierc'd pupil spouts the boiling blood;
 Sing'd are his brows; the scorching lids grow black;
 The gelly bubbles, and the fibres crack.
 465 And as when Arm'ers temper in the ford
 The keen-edg'd pole-axe, or the shining sword,
 The red-hot metal hisses in the lake,
 Thus in his eyeball his'd the plunging stake.
 He sends a dreadful groan: the rocks around
 470 Thro' all their inmost-winding caves resound.
 Scar'd we receded. Forth, with frantic hand
 He tore, and dash'd on earth the goary brand:
 Then calls the *Cyclops*, all that round him dwell,
 With voice like thunder, and a direful yell.
 475 From all their dens the one-ey'd race repair,
 From rifted rocks, and mountains bleak in air.

has transferr'd this whole adventure into his *Cyclops* with very little alteration, and in particular the former comparison. But to instance in all that *Euripides* has imitated, would be to transcribe a great part of that Tragedy. In short, this Episode in general is very noble; but if the Interlude about *Ontis* be at all allowable in so grave and majestic a Poem, it is only allowable because it is here related before a light and injudicious assembly, I mean the *Phæacians*, to whom any thing more great or serious would have been less pleasing; so that the Poet writes to his audience. I wonder this has never been offer'd in defence of this low entertainment.

All

All haste assembled, at his well-known roar,
Enquire the cause, and croud the cavern door.

What hurts thee, *Polypheme*? what strange affright
480 Thus breaks our slumbers, and disturbs the night?

Does any mortal in th' unguarded hour
Of sleep, oppress thee, or by fraud or pow'r?
Or thieves insidious thy fair flock surprize?
Thus they: the *Cyclop*. from his den replies.

485 Friends, *Noman* kills me; *Noman* in the house
Of sleep, oppresses me with fraudulent pow'r.

" If no man hurt thee, but the hand divine

" Inflict disease, it fits thee to resign:

" To *Jove* or to thy father *Neptune* pray.

490 The brethren cry'd, and instant strode away.

Joy touch'd my secret soul, and conscious heart,
Pleas'd with th' effect of conduct and of art.

Mean-time the *Cyclop*, raging with his wound,

Spreads his wide arms, and searches round and round:

495 At last, the stone removing from the gate,

With hands extended in the midst he fate;

And

v. 495. — [The stone removing from the gate.] This conduct of *Polypheme* may seem very absurd, and it looks to be improbable that he should not call the other Giants to assist him, in the detection of the persons who had taken his sight from him; especially when it was now day-light, and they at hand. *Eustathius* was aware of the objection, and imputes it to his folly and dullness.

And search'd each passing sheep, and felt it o'er,
Secure to seize us ere we reach'd the door.

(Such as his shallow wit, he deem'd was mine)

500 But secret I revolv'd the deep design:

'Twas for our lives my lab'ring bosom wrought;

Each scheme I turn'd, and sharpen'd every thought;

This way and that, I cast to save my friends,

'Till one resolve my varying counsel ends.

505 Strong were the Rams, with native purple fair,
Well fed, and largest of the fleecy care.

These three and three, with osier bands we ty'd,

(The twining bands the Cyclop's bed supply'd)

The midmost bore a man; the outward two

510 Secur'd each side: So bound we all the crew.

One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock;

In his deep fleece my grasping hands I lock;

And

ness. Tully, *5. Tuscul.* gives the same character of Polypheme; and because it vindicates Homer for introducing a speech of Polypheme to his Ram, I will beg leave to transcribe it. *Tiresiam, quem sapientem fingunt poeta, nunquam inducunt deplorantem Cæcitatem suam; at verò Polyphemum Homerus, cum immanem ferumque finxisset, cum ariete etiam colloquentem facit ejusque laudare fortunas, quod quæ vellet, ingredi posset, & quæ vellet attingere: Rectè hic equidem; nihilo enim erat ipse Cyclops quam aries ille prudentior.* This is a full defence of Homer; but Tully has mistaken the words of Polypheme to the Ram, for there is no resemblance to *ejus laudare fortunas, quod quæ vellet ingredi posset, &c.* I suppose Tully quoted by memory.

v. 511. One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock.] This passage has been misunderstood, to imply that Ulysses took more care of

And fast beneath, in woolly curls inwove,
There cling implicate, and confide in *Jove*.

§15 When rosy morning glimmer'd o'er the dales,
He drove to pasture all the lusty males:
The ewes still folded, with distended thighs
Unmilk'd, lay bleating in distressful cries.

of himself than of his companions, in chusing the largest ram for his own convenience; an imputation unworthy of the character of an Heroe. But there is no ground for it, he takes more care of his friends than of his own person, for he allows them three sheep, and lets them escape before him. Besides, this conduct was necessary; for all his friends were bound, and, by chusing this ram, he keeps himself at liberty to unbind the rest after their escape. Neither was there any other method practicable; for, he being the last, there was no person to bind him. *Eustathius*.

The care *Ulysses* takes of his companions agrees with the character of *Horace*.

*Dum sibi, dum sociis reditum parat, aspera multa
Pertulit—*

But it may seem improbable that a Ram should be able to carry so great a burthen as *Ulysses*; the generation of sheep, as well as men, may appear to have decreas'd since the days of *Ulysses*. *Homer* himself seems to have guarded against this objection, he describes these sheep as εὐτροφείς, καλοί, μεγάλοι; the Ram is spoken of as μακρὰ βίβας, (an expression apply'd to *Ajax*, as *Eustathius* observes, in the *Iliad*.) History informs us of sheep of a very large size in other countries, and a Poet is at liberty to chuse the largest, if by that method he gives his story a greater appearance of probability.

v. 517. The Ewes still folded,—
Unmilk'd, lay bleating.]

This particularity may seem of no importance, and consequently unnecessary: but it is in Poetry as in Painting; they both with very good effect use circumstances that are not absolutely necessary to the subject, but only appendages and embellishments. This particular has that effect, it represents Nature, and therefore gives an air of truth and probability to the story. *Dacier*.

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But heedless of those cares, with anguish stung,

520 He felt their fleeces as they pass'd along,
(Fool that he was) and let them safely go,
All unsuspecting of their freight below.

The master Ram at last approach'd the gate,
Charg'd with his wool, and with *Ulysses'* fate.

525 Him while he pass'd the monster blind bespoke:
What makes my ram the lag of all the flock?
First thou wert wont to crop the flow'ry mead,
First to the field and river's bank to lead,
And first with stately step at evening hour

530 Thy fleecy fellows usher to their bow'r.
Now far the last, with pensive pace and slow
Thou mov'st, as conscious of thy master's woe!
Seest thou these lids that now unfold in vain?
(The deed of *Noman* and his wicked train)

535 Oh! didst thou feel for thy afflicted Lord,
And wou'd but Fate the pow'r of speech afford;
Soon might'st thou tell me, where in secret here
The dastard lurks, all trembling with his fear:
Swung round and round, and dash'd from rock to
rock,

40 His batter'd brains shou'd on the pavement smoke.

No.

No ease, no pleasure my sad heart receives,
While such a monster as vile *Noman* lives.

The Giant spoke, and thro' the hollow rock
Dismiss'd the Ram, the father of the flock.

§45 No sooner freed; and thro' th' enclosure past,
First I release my self, my fellows last:
Fat sheep and goats in throngs we drive before;
And reach our vessel on the winding shore.

With joy the sailors view their friends return'd,
§50 And hail us living whom as dead they mourn'd.
Big tears of transport stand in ev'ry eye:

I check their fondness, and command to fly.
Aboard in haste they heave the wealthy sheep,
And snatch their oars, and rush into the deep.

§55 Now off at sea, and from the shallows clear,
As far as human voice cou'd reach the ear;
With taunts the distant giant I accost,
Hear me, oh *Cyclop*! hear ungracious host!

'Twas on no coward, no ignoble slave,
§60 Thou meditat'st thy meal in yonder cave;
But one, the vengeance fated from above
Doom'd to inflict; the instrument of *Jove*.
Thy barb'rous breach of hospitable bands,
The God, the God revenges by my hands.

565 These words the Cyclops' burning rage provoke:

From the tall hill he rends a pointed rock;

High o'er the billows flew the massy load,

And near the ship came thund'ring on the flood.

It almost brush'd the helm; and fell before:

570 The whole sea shook, and reflux beat the shore,

The

v. 569. *It almost brush'd the helm, &c.*] The Ancients, remarks *Enthadius*, placed an Obelisk and Asterism before this verse; the former, to note that they thought it misplaced; the latter, to shew that they look'd upon it as a beauty. Apparently it is not agreeable to the description; for how is it possible that this huge rock falling before the vessel should endanger the rudder, which is in the stern? Can a ship sail with the stern foremost? Some ancient Criticks, to take away the contradiction, have asserted that *Ulysses* turn'd his ship to speak to *Polypheme*; but this is absurd, for why could not *Ulysses* speak from the stern as well as from the prow? It therefore seems that the verse ought to be entirely omitted, as undoubtedly it may without any chasm in the Author. We find it inserted a little lower, and there it corresponds with the description, and stands with propriety.

But if we suppose that the ship of *Ulysses* lay at such a distance from the cave of *Polypheme*, as to make it necessary to bring it nearer, to be heard distinctly; then indeed we may solve the difficulty, and let the verse stand: for if we suppose *Ulysses* approaching toward *Polypheme*, then the rock may be said to be thrown before the vessel, that is, beyond it, and endanger the rudder, and this bears some appearance of probability.

This passage brings to my memory a description of *Polypheme* in *Apollonius, Argonaut.* 1.

Καῖνος ἀνὴρ καὶ πόντις ἐπὶ γλαυκοῖο θεῶσκεν
Οἰδμήλιος, ἐδὲ θεὸς βίπτην πόδας ἀλλ' ἔσαν ἄκραις
Ἵχνησι τεργόμενος δακρὴ πεφύρητο κελεύθῳ.

If *Polypheme* had really this quality of running upon the waves, he might have destroy'd *Ulysses* without throwing this mountain; but *Apollonius* is undoubtedly guilty of an absurdity, and one might rather

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The strong concussion on the heaving tyde

Roll'd back the vessel to the Island's side:

Again I shov'd her off; our fate to fly,

Each nerve we stretch, and ev'ry oar we ply.

575 Just 'scap'd impending death, when now again

We twice as far had furrow'd back the main,

Once more I raise my voice; my friends afraid

With mild entreaties my design dissuade.

What boots the god-less Giant to provoke?

580 Whose arm may sink us at a single stroke.

Already, when the dreadful rock he threw,

Old Ocean shook, and back his surges flew.

Thy sounding voice directs his aim again;

The rock o'erwhelms us, and we 'scap'd in vain.

585 But I, of mind elate, and scorning fear,

Thus with new taunts insult the monster's ear.

rather believe that he would sink the earth at every step, than run upon the waters with such lightness as not to wet his feet. *Virgil* has more judiciously apply'd those lines to *Camilla* in his *Æneis*.

—*Mare per medium fluctu suspensa timenti
Ferret iter, celeres nec tingeret aquore plantas.*

The Poet expresses the swiftness of *Camilla* in the nimble flow of the verse, which consists almost entirely of dactyles, and runs off with the utmost rapidity, like the last of those quoted from *Æpollonius*.

Cyclop!

Cyclop! if any, pitying thy disgrace,
 Ask who disfigur'd thus that eye-less face?
 Say 'twas *Ulysses*; 'twas his deed, declare.
 90 *Laertes*' son, of *Ithaca* the fair;
Ulysses, far in fighting fields renown'd,
 Before whose arm *Troy* tumbled to the ground.

Th'astonisht Savage with a roar replies:
 Oh heav'n's! oh faith of ancient prophecies!
 95 This, *Telemus Eurymedes* foretold,
 (The mighty Seer who on these hills grew old;

v. 595. *This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold.*] This incident sufficiently shews the use of that dissimulation which enters into the character of *Ulysses*: If he had discover'd his name, the *Cyclops* had destroy'd him as his most dangerous enemy. *Plutarch* in his discourse upon Garrulity, commends the fidelity of the companions of *Ulysses*, who when they were dragg'd by this Giant and dash'd against the rock, confess'd not a word concerning their Lord, and scorn'd to purchase their lives at the expence of their honesty. *Ulysses* himself, adds he, was the most eloquent and most silent of men; he knew that a word spoken never wrought so much good, as a word conceal'd; Men teach us to speak, but the Gods teach us silence; for silence is the first thing that is taught us at our initiation into sacred mysteries; and we find these companions had profited under so great a Master in silence as *Ulysses*.

Ovid relates this prophecy in the story of *Polypheme* and *Galatea*.

*Telemus interea Siculum delatus in aequor,
 Telemus Eurymides, quem nulla fefellerat ales,
 Terribilem Polyphemon adit; lumenque quod unum
 Fronte geris mediâ, rapiet tibi, dixit, Ulysses:
 Risit, & o. vatam solidissime, falleris, inquit,
 Altera jam rapuit: —————*

Skill'd

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Skill'd the dark fates of mortals to declare,
And learn'd in all wing'd omens of the air)
Long since he menac'd, such was Fate's command;

600 And nam'd *Ulysses* as the destin'd hand.

I deem'd some godlike Giant to behold,
Or lofty Heroe, haughty, brave, and bold;
Not this weak pigmy-wretch, of mean design,
Who not by strength subdu'd me, but by wine.

605 But come, accept our gifts, and join to pray
Great *Neptune's* blessing on the wat'ry way:

For his I am, and I the lineage own;

Th' immortal father no less boasts the son.

His pow'r can heal me, and re-light my eyes;

610 And only his, of all the Gods on high.

v. 603. *Not this weak pigmy-wretch*——] This is spoken in compliance with the character of a Giant; the *Phaeacians* wonder'd at the manly stature of *Ulysses*, *Polypheme* speaks of him as a dwarf; his rage undoubtedly made him treat him with so much contempt. Nothing in nature can be better imagin'd than this story of the *Cyclops*, if we consider the assembly before which it was spoken, I mean the *Phaeacians*, who had been driven from their habitation by the *Cyclopeans*, as appears from the sixth of the *Odyssey*, and compell'd to make a new settlement in their present country: *Ulysses* gratifies them by shewing what revenge he took upon one of their ancient enemies, and they could not decently refuse assistance to a person, who had punish'd those who had insulted their forefathers.

O! could this arm (I thus aloud rejoin'd)
 From that vast bulk dislodge thy bloody mind,
 And send thee howling to the realms of night!
 As sure, as *Neptune* cannot give thee fight.

615 Thus I: while raging he repeats his cries,
 With hands uplifted to the starry skies.
 Hear me, oh *Neptune*! thou whose arms are hurl'd
 From shore to shore, and gird the solid world.

If thine I am, nor thou my birth disown,
 620 And if th' unhappy *Cyclop* be thy Son;
 Let not *Ulysses* breathe his native air,
Laertes' son, of *Ithaca* the fair.

If to review his country be his fate,
 Be it thro' toils and sufferings, long and late;
 625 His lost companions let him first deplore;
 Some vessel, not his own, transport him o'er;

v. 617. *The prayer of the Cyclops.*] This is a master-piece of art in *Ulysses*; he shews *Neptune* to be his enemy, which might deter the *Phaeacians* from assisting in his transportation, yet brings this very circumstance as an argument to induce them to it. O *Neptune*, says the *Cyclop*, destroy *Ulysses*, or if he be fated to return, may it be in a vessel not of his own! Here he plainly tells the *Phaeacians* that the prayer of *Cyclops* was almost accomplish'd, for his own ships were destroy'd by *Neptune*, and now he was ready to sail in a foreign vessel; by which the whole prayer would be compleated. By this he persuades them, that they were the people ordain'd by the Fates to land him in his own country.

And when at home from foreign sufferings freed,
More near and deep, domestick woes succeed!

With Imprecations thus he fill'd the air,

630 And angry *Neptune* heard th' unrighteous pray'r.

A larger rock then heaving from the plain,

He whirl'd it round; it sung across the main:

It fell, and brush'd the stern: The billows roar,

Shake at the weight, and reflux beat the shore.

635 With all our force we kept aloof to sea,

And gain'd the Island where our vessels lay.

Our sight the whole collected navy cheer'd,

Who, waiting long, by turns had hop'd and fear'd.

There disembarking on the green sea-side,

640 We land our cattle, and the spoil divide:

Of these due shares to ev'ry sailor fall;

The master Ram was voted mine by all:

And him (the guardian of *Ulysses'* fate)

With pious mind to Heav'n I consecrate.

v. 642. *The master Ram was voted mine.*] This perhaps might be a present of honour and distinction: But I should rather take it with *Eustathius* to be the Ram which brought *Ulysses* out of the den of *Polypheme*. That Heroe immediately offers it in sacrifice to *Jupiter*, in gratitude for his deliverance; an instance of piety to be imitated in more enlighten'd ages.

But

545 But the great God, whose thunder rends the skies,
Averse, beholds the smoaking sacrifice;
And see me wand'ring still from coast to coast;
And all my vessels, all my people, lost!

While thoughtless we, indulge the genial rite,
650 As plenteous cates and flowing bowls invite;
'Till evening *Phæbus* roll'd away the light:
Stretch'd on the shore in careless ease we rest,
'Till ruddy morning purpled o'er the east.
Then from their anchors all our ships unbind,
655 And mount the decks, and call the willing wind.
Now rang'd in order on our banks, we sweep
With hasty strokes the hoarse-resounding deep;
Blind to the future, pensive with our fears,
Glad for the living, for the dead in tears.

The book concludes with a testimony of this Heroe's humanity; in the midst of the joy for his own safety, his generous heart finds room for a tender sentiment for the loss of his companions; both his joys and his sorrows are commendable and virtuous.

Virgil has borrow'd this Episode of *Polyphemus*, and inserted it into the third of the *Æneis*. I will not presume to decide which Author has the greatest success, they both have their peculiar excellencies. *Rapine* confesses this Episode to be equal to any parts of the *Iliad*, that it is an original, and that *Homer* introduced that monstrous character to shew the Marvelous, and paint it in a new set of colours. *Demetrius Phalerens* calls it a piece of Sublime strangely horrible; and *Longinus*, even while he is condemning the *Odyssey*, allows this adventure of *Polypheme* to be very great and beautiful; (for so Monsieur *Boileau* understands *Longinus*, tho' Monsieur

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ſieur *Dacier* differs from his judgment.) In *Homer* we find a greater variety of natural incidents than in *Virgil*, but in *Virgil* a greater pomp of verſe. *Homer* is not uniform in his deſcription, but ſometimes ſtoops perhaps below the dignity of Epic Poetry; *Virgil* walks along with an even, grave, and majeſtic pace: They both raiſe our admiration, mix'd with delight and terror.

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